POPULATION MOBILITY IN RURAL BANGLADESH: THE CIRCULATION OF WORKING PEOPLE

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND CONVENTIONS

aman	: Traditional varieties of paddy harvest in November/December
aus	: Traditional varieties of paddy harvest in July/August
bazar	: permanent market or daily market
bhadoi	: crop season (see Figure 3.3)
bhities	: high raised ground
bigha	: unit of land measurement, officially 1 bigha = 0.33 acres but with many local variations
boro	: crop season (see Figure 3.3)
borolok	: rich people/family, upper class
char	: newly formed landmass created by fluvial process of river
chhotolok	: poor or low status people
chowkidary tax	: village local tax based on economic condition of the household
daridralok	: poor
dhani	: rich
dhulot fasal	: oilseeds, pulses and spices
dobas	: small pool or swamp or ditches
ghor-jamai	: when a man after marriage moves to his father-in-law's residence for permanent living, he used to be called ghor-jamai (resident son-in-law)
gonjo	: large trading centre
gorib	: poor
grihasti	: agricultural farm work
haat	: afternoon village market held mostly twice a week
hoymantic	: crop season (see Figure 3.3)
IRRI	: hybrid varieties of rice (paddy) named after the International Rice Research Institute, based in Manila, Philippines
izzat	: social prestige of a person and his/her family
Jola (Jolha)	: weaver, low status family
kachamal	: fresh vegetables and or fruits
kandi	: village (common to Sakhipur region)
khals	: natural or man-made canals
khana	: eating group; food; household
kharif	: crop season, mostly same as hoymantic
kuli	: porter
maund	: local unit of weight, 1 maund = 37.326 kg
moidhom sreni	: middle class

muhajir : Muslim immigrants from India(due to partition of the subcontinent)

niri borga : system of leasing land to agricultural labourers (see section 7.3.2)

pan : betel leaf
peon (peonage) : office messenger, attendant, orderly etc.
purdah (parda) : socio-religious tradition of secluding women from public view

rabi : crop season (see Figure 3.3)
raiyot : tenant or farm-labourer under a landlord (see section 7.3.2)
rickshaw : three-wheeled hooded vehicle drawn by a person

Sheikh : middle status Muslim family
seer : a measure of weight 1 seer =0.933 kg
sorbohara : destitute (people/family)
srenis : classes
Syed : high status Muslim family (believed to be descendants of the Prophet)

taka : the monetary unit of Bangladesh, as of 1980 US$1 = 15.45 taka
thana : administrative unit consisting of 150-200 villages (see section 2.3.3)
thika borga : system of leasing land to agricultural labourers (see section 7.3.2)

ujan (upstream): In the study villages, the term 'ujan' is commonly used by seasonal movers to indicate their places of destination within Dhaka, Mymensingh and Sylhet - the three upstream district. Sometimes they also use 'uttar' (north) to denote those places.
upazila : same as thana
uttar (north) : see 'ujan'

vati (downstream) : Districts such as Bakergonj and Patuakhali are commonly known as 'vati' (downstream) regions to the seasonal movers. See 'ujan'
vhusimal : mainly oilseeds and pulses

zamindar : landlord under British rule in India

Currencies, weights, and measures of area

Taka	: local currency name (Tk. abbr. of Taka) US$1 = 15.45 Tk. as of 1980 US$1 = 17.98 Tk. as of 1981 US$1 = 25.34 Tk. as of 1984
seer	: local measure of weight 1 seer = 0.933 kg
maund	: local measure of weight 1 maund = 40 seers = 37.326 kg
acre	: 1 acre = 0.4047 hectares
mile	: 1 mile = 1.609 kilometres
	: 1 square mile = 2.5899 square kilometres

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ABSTRACT

This study is primarily concerned with work-related movement patterns of rural people in Bangladesh. It involves a general historical review of the internal migration of village people at the national level, and a comprehensive assessment of contemporary mobility behaviour of household earning members in three selected rural areas in Bangladesh. The main focus is on two types of movement, commuting and circular migration. In the selected rural communities, a range of inquiries were carried out at individual, household and community levels with a view to: (i) assessing the total movement pattern of village populations in 1980; (ii) establishing individual and household characteristics of commuters and circular migrants; (iii) distinguishing these two types of movers from stayers and seasonal migrants; and (iv) examining the relationship between socio-economic status and mobility behaviour in rural Bangladesh.

The main body of the thesis is comprised of 9 chapters. Chapter 1 gives a general introduction to the scope and design of the dissertation. Chapter 2 examines some conceptual, theoretical and methodological issues of mobility studies in the Bangladesh context. A brief review of the history of population movement and urbanization in Bangladesh is given in this chapter, along with an assessment of the limitations of existing migration literature in this country. In Chapter 3

some aspects of the physical environment, population growth and distribution, and agricultural patterns in the three study areas are examined. An overview of all current mobility patterns in these areas, including permanent relocation and immobility, is also provided in this chapter. Chapter 4 illustrates the space-time patterns of commuting and circular migration while Chapter 5 elaborates on the pattern and process of commuting trips made by people with different occupations in Rampal.

Chapters 6 and 7 contain detailed examinations of the various characteristics of commuters and circular migrants. Chapter 6 deals with individual characteristics of these movers and their stated reasons for movement while Chapter 7 is concerned with their household attributes. In Chapter 8 the relationship between mobility behaviour and socio-economic status of the surveyed population is examined empirically. The concluding chapter (Chapter 9) briefly discusses the relevance of circular mobility in Bangladesh in the light of the major findings from village surveys. Shortcomings of the study and some avenues for future research are also indicated here.

The major conclusions derived from this study are as follows:

1. The basic pattern of movement of working people originating from rural areas in Bangladesh is circular, involving temporary relocation from a

village home base rather than the conventional linear type of migration. Generally the pattern includes three broad types of movements: commuting, circular migration, and seasonal migration. Permanent relocation for an economic reason usually follows some experience of circular mobility.

2. Commuting has been widely practised by villagers from different age groups, occupations, and education levels. The individuals who participate in circular migration are relatively young, well educated, unmarried, economically better-off, and come from larger families. They prefer salaried jobs and services and are strongly directed to cities and towns. Seasonal migration, on the other hand, is more likely to be found among the labourers in poor regions of the country.
3. The relationship between population movement and agriculture pattern indicates that, generally, the villagers from intensive agriculture areas prefer commuting, and from traditional or poor farming zones tend to migrate.
4. It is evident that among the rural families a dual or multiple occupation (or income) strategy has been evolving through the process of circular migration. Increased pressure of population on land is further strengthening this strategy and the circulation process.

5. Empirical evidence shows that in rural Bangladlesh people from different socio-economic claslses follow different patterns of movement for earning a livelihood. The pattern of socio-economic statuses for male movers is fairly bi-modal which indicates that within the pyramidal social structure those who are in either the higher or the lower socio-economic strata have higher rates of mobility than those who lie at the top, middle and bottom levels. The detailed pattern further suggests that earning males from the upper strata are more attracted to circular migration while those originating from the lower socio-economic strata are more likely to make short-term movements such as commuting and seasonal migration. Thus it can be concluced that commuting is a viable alternative to circular migration, especially among villagers in the lower socio-economic strata.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Movement of human population within densely settled developing countries is both a widely discussed phenomenon and a highly visible problem. The rapid growth of cities in Asia and the proliferation of sprawling 'squatter' and slum settlements over the past 20 to 30 years is due, in a large part, to accelerating rural-urban population drift. Low-income peasants, landless labourers, unemployed and underemployed youths, victims of natural disasters, famine and war, together with members of the educated elite, comprise the net migrations streams frequently identified in recent censuses and surveys. Yet not all of this movement results in long-term displacement of population: detailed empirical research in rural and urban areas has established that much of the migration from the countryside involves the movers in temporary rather than permanent relocation.

Bangladesh emerged from the war of liberation in 1971 as a poor country characterised by an unfavourable man-land ratio, increasing landlessness, persistent food shortages, low level of technology, rudimentary infrastructure and exploding population (Alamgir 1980). Only seven countries have more population than Bangladesh, and the total population of the last 80

countries in the world list is significantly lower than the total number of Bangladeshi. By any standard Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, with 624 persons per square kilometre (1617 persons per square mile) at the 1981 census. Although the great majority of people (85 percent) still live in villages, the urban-resident population has been increasing rapidly, especially since the war of liberation. The average annual rate of urban population growth in Bangladesh was 10.6 percent during the 1974-81 census period compared with 2.3 percent for the population as a whole.

In spite of the magnitude of population movement in a country with nearly 100 million inhabitants, little attention has been focused on the nature and process of internal migration. The few empirical studies completed so far have emphasized rural out-migration, mostly the conventional rural-urban migration stream. The vast majority of internal movements such as intra-rural relocation, seasonal migration, commuting and circular migration, have been largely ignored by researchers as well as census surveys. It is with a view to providing a more comprehensive analysis of mobility in Bangladesh that the present study has been undertaken.

1.1 THE FOCUS OF THE STUDY

Given the paucity of published literature on

population mobility in Bangladesh, it has been necessary to conduct both a general historical review of the internal migration of village people at the national level, as well as intensive field inquiry into contemporary movement in selected rural areas. The study focuses attention on two dominant forms of movement behaviour - commuting and circular migration. In the selected rural communities, a range of inquiries were undertaken with a view to: (i) assessing the total movement pattern of village populations in 1980; (ii) establishing individual and household characteristics of commuters and circular migrants, (iii) differentiating these two types of movers from stayers and seasonal movers; and (iv) examining the relationship between socio-economic status and mobility behaviour in rural Bangladesh.

1.1.1 Some definitions

In the context of rural settlements in Bangladesh the following definitions were adopted in the field. A commuter is a villager who regularly (though not necessarily every day) leaves his rural residence either for work or for study, and goes to destination(s) which is/are located at least two miles away from his home. Included here are those villagers who commute either daily (at least 3 or 4 days per week) or bi-weekly/ weekly throughout the year, as well as seasonal movers who commute for at least a whole season per year.

Circular migrants, on the other hand, are those persons who have moved either to an urban centre or to a rural place for work or study, and intend to return or have recently returned to the study village after living at their destination for a period of at least three months or a complete season (in the case of seasonal circular migrants).

It is clear from these definitions that the field inquiries were designed primarily to obtain information on movements related to work (earning income in cash or kind) or study. The inquiry deliberately excluded movement for reasons such as marriage, visiting relatives, occasional shopping, religious or recreational tours, and many other social and cultural activities (see Chapman 1970). The theme of this study is thus the mobility behaviour of working people or income earners. In this regard care should be taken when comparing findings about mobility in rural Bangladesh with those for other communities in the Third World where a wider range of circular forms of movement have been analysed.

1.2 THE SELECTION OF STUDY AREAS

In the plan for field research, it was proposed that six villages from Dhaka, Comilla and Faridpur districts would be selected. These would comprise two contiguous village settlements from each district. After an extensive reconnaissance of village communities

in several thanas (administrative regions consisting of 150-200 villages) within those districts, however, it was decided to survey 14 villages taking 4 from Dhaka, 4 from Comilla and 6 from Faridpur districts (Figure 1.1). The main reason for this increase in the number of village units surveyed was to get a broader population base incorporating a range of socio-economic classes, occupation groups, and mobility forms which are relevant in rural Bangladesh.

The villages in Dhaka district were selected from Rampal union (an administrative unit comprising 10-12 villages) in the Munshigonj thana; in Comilla district they were from East Chandina union in the Chandina thana; and in Faridpur, the villages were selected from Sakhipur union in the Bhedargonj thana (for detailed locations and village names see Figure 1.1). In this thesis, these three specific field areas will be called Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur as in each area the selected villages are contiguous and have a common physical and cultural background. In Chapter 3 the geographical setting of these three areas is described while in Chapter 2 (section 2.2) some spatial attributes (shape and size) of Bangladeshi villages are detailed.

1.2.1 Reasons for selecting the study areas

The reasons for selecting three districts which are located in the central part of Bangladesh are manifold. First, this has been an area of extensive

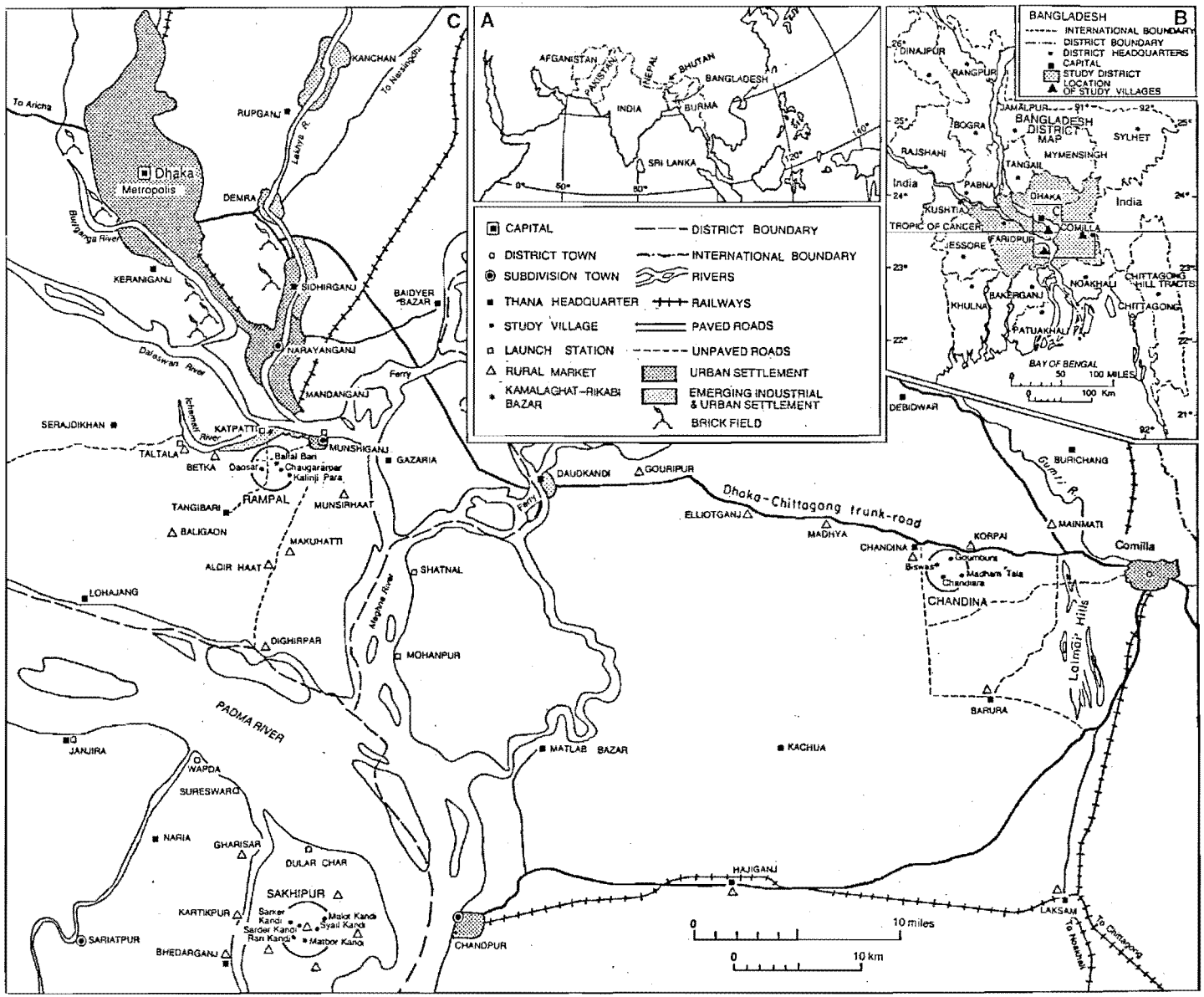


Figure 1·1 BANGLADESH: THE LOCATION OF THE STUDY VILLAGES

rural out-migration for many years. As a result, it was possible to find rural communities with sufficient numbers of different types of movers, including returnees. Second, a number of urban centres including the national capital, are located near these areas. They are the destinations for various forms of periodic movements, especially commuting between village and town. Third, although the three field sites are not far from one another, the agricultural practices in these regions are quite different and thus it was possible to examine mobility patterns of villages with different levels of agricultural development. Finally, as the researcher himself is from this area, a considerable amount of background information on rural society and economy is already available. In field research this is an important consideration when background information from secondary sources is exceedingly scarce and the time for data collection in Bangladesh was severely constrained by the decision to undertake doctoral research in New Zealand.

According to the 1981 population census there are approximately 20,000 villages within Dhaka, Comilla and Faridpur districts, and each village has an average population in excess of 800 persons. There is no sampling frame which would enable the 'universe' of villages to be stratified on the basis of levels of migration in order to permit selection of a small sample of villages with particular migration characteristics.

Moreover, in Bangladesh basic socio-economic data at the village level is not available.

It was also necessary to limit our surveys to a few village communities so that a closer examination of the total mobility behaviour of villagers, and the relationships between mobility and socio-economic status, could be established. Under these circumstances, a combination of field techniques (e.g. field reconnaissance, discussion with a cross-section of informants, and personal observation) were used to select survey locations. Choice of the three areas, namely Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur, and 14 villages was made by the researcher after considering a range of spatio-cultural factors (Table 1.1).

1.3 DESIGN OF THE FIELD RESEARCH

Population movement from a small community such as a village or hamlet usually occurs because of a wide range of factors, some of which are personal or individual, others related to family or household affairs, and others still linked to the community itself. In many parts of the Third World, micro-scale surveys of population movement (mostly village-based) have tended to focus on individual, household, and community levels of inquiry (UN 1982b, 9). In this study such an approach was adopted to data collection in Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur areas (Table 1.1).

The study involved an extensive rural survey

Table 1.1

Stages of Field Research
(20 March 1981 to 31 May 1982)

Stage	Nature of Work	Place of Work	Time Spent (in weeks)	Interview Completion	Sampling frame and size	Type of instrument	Respondents	Information collected (or considered)
1	Village selection	Rural areas (Dhaka, Comilla, and Faridpur districts)	6 March/April 1981		Purposive selection: selected 14 villages from 3 locations taking 4 villages from Dhaka, 4 from Comilla and 6 from Faridpur district respectively (see Figure 1.1)	Secondary information; village reconnaissance; consulting experts and local informants	Experts local informants	Selection criteria considered: village size, distance from big urban centres, local and external transportation system, villagers socio-economic conditions, major economic activities, farming types and intensity, tenural system, labour circulation, and mobility behaviour of the villagers since late 1940s.
2	Household census survey	14 selected villages	8 Discontinuous (April-Nov. 1981)	Surveyed all households	Surveyed all current households (HHs) within 14 villages (Total HHs = 1941 with total popn. 12391)	Door to door interview through census schedule (See Appendix 7)	HH head or next available adult member of the family	Aggregate demographic and socio-economic information of the HH. General demographic, education, and occupation or working status of all members, current or latest mobility behaviour of the ever moving HH member.
3	Prospective mobility registration	Selected villages in Rampal (Dhaka)	52 (1 June 1981 to 31 May 1982)	14% of 293 head commuters	Stratified random* (Sample size: 40)	Prospective mobility register schedule (interviewed each commuter every week) (See Appendix 9)	Respective commuter	Recorded out and in movements of 40 selected commuters for continuous one year. For each trip data sought: destination, distance, streams, date and time of move out and move in, duration of absence (from home) and staying at destination, mode of transport, travelling time and purpose of trip. For each week, information such as no. of missing trips and cause of missing are also collected.

contd.

Stage	Nature of Work	Place of Work	Time Spent (in weeks)	Interview Completion	Sampling frame and size	Type of instrument	Respondents	Information collected (or considered)
4	Household socio-economic survey	14 selected villages	11 Discon-tinuous (May-Feb. 1981/82)	22% of total households	Surveyed all sampled stayers, commuters, returnees, and circular migrants households in 14 villages (Total sample: 431) (See Stages 5-8)	Interviewed through HH socio-economic schedule (see Appendix 8)	Respective household head	Economic: Housing and accommodation; land ownership and transfer; HH occupation, earning member, income sources, income, HH assets and belongings; Agricultural: Tenural status, land operation, major crop pattern, cropping intensity, food self-sufficiency, labour used/exchanged/hired; Others: Attitudes and opinions of head.
5	Interview with stayers	"	4 to 5 Discon-tinuous (June-Feb.) 1981/82	25% of total head stayers	Stratified random* (interviewed only those heads whose HHs had no ever moved member) (Total sample: 120, taking 40 from each survey area)	Interviewed through stayer schedule	Respective stayer	Family information: Education, occupation, tenural status and mobility behaviour of parents, sibs, and sons; Personal inquiries: Position among sibs; education, marital information, income and employment characteristics, indoor/outdoor working time, motive behind staying back to the village, social networks, opinions and attitudes of different issues on family life and community life.
6	Interview with commuters	"	"	21% of head commuters	Stratified random* (interviewed mostly head commuters) (Total sample: 120, 40 from each location)	Interviewed through commuter schedule	Respective commuter	Family information: Same as collected for stayers (Stage 5) Personal inquiries: Position among sibs, education, marital information, detail economic and working situation, partial life history survey, detail nature of commuting and motive behind commuting, opinions and attitudes of different issues.

contd.

Stage	Nature of Work	Place of Work	Time Spent (in weeks)	Interview Completion	Sampling frame and size	Type of instrument	Respondents	Information collected (or considered)
7	Interview with returnees (ex circular migrants)	"	"	57% of total returnees	Stratified random* (Total sample: 98, taking 29 from Rampal, 37 from Chandina and 32 from Sakhipur)	Interviewed through returnee schedule	Respective returnee	Family information: Same as given in Stage 5. Personal inquiries: Position among sibs, detailed current marital information, education, economic and working situation; detailed inquiry about demographic, economic, education and various aspects of movement based on important stages of circulation as well as retrospective history survey; future plan and migration satisfaction, opinions and attitudes of different issues of life.
8	Interview with circular migrant	14 selected villages and major urban destinations	6 discontinuous (May-Feb. 1981/82)	16% of of total circular migrants	Stratified random* (Total sample: 93; 27 from Rampal, 34 from Chandina and 32 from Sakhipur)	Interview through circular migrant schedule	Respective circular migrant	Same as Stage 7
9	A brief inquiry of permanent migrants (PMs)	14 selected villages	2 to 3 discontinuous 1981/82	Inquired all PMs briefly	Surveyed all 305 PM cases briefly and 120 random cases more closely	Survey conducted through a short questionnaire	Best known person(s) to the permanent migrant (from his village of origin)	Migrant's village of origin, present place of destination, stream of migration, current occupation, contact with the village of origin, approximate year of permanent migration, previous mobility behaviour, single or moved with family, and principal cause of relocation; Immediately before permanent migration: age, sex, religion, education, marital status, occupation, socio-economic position, tenural status, and membership status.

contd.

Stage	Nature of Work	Place of Work	Time Spent (in weeks)	Interview Completion	Sampling frame and size	Type of instrument	Respondents	Information collected (or considered)
10	Community survey	In each study location	"			Consultation with the community leaders/elders; Researcher's own observation; survey is conducted through structured/ open question-naire	Selected community leaders/ elders and different cross-section of community people	Local and regional setting: physiography agro-climatic seasons, natural calamities, transportation network, relative location, of different service centres; Activities (current and retrospective): crop pattern and intensity, tenural system, non-farm occupations, wage fluctuation; Opinions and attitudes of local informants: about various forms of movements, female mobility, patterns and determinants of current and retrospective movements, effect of movement to the village, and others.

* In each survey location families were stratified into seven socio-economic status groups (Chapter 8) and samples were drawn randomly.

lasting for nearly 60 weeks and covering 1941 households (12391 population) in 14 selected villages. Several field instruments were employed in collecting information on the individual, the household, and the village community. These included formal and informal interviews, predesigned questionnaire surveys, and field observation (Table 1.1). The procedures used in gathering information at the individual, household, and community levels are described in greater detail in Appendix 6. A brief summary of field research strategies is given in Table 1.1.

1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

Through use of a micro-analytical approach this empirical study explores the contemporary mobility of village working people in Bangladesh; the characteristics of movers, especially the commuters and circular migrants, and the relationship between socio-economic status of villagers and their mobility behaviour. In Chapter 2, some conceptual, theoretical, and methodological issues which are important in the context of analysis of population movement in Bangladesh are examined. In addition to this, a brief review of the history of population movement and urbanization in Bangladesh is presented, along with an outline of the limitations of existing migration literature in this country.

In Chapter 3 some aspects of the physical

environment, population growth and distribution, and agricultural development in the three research areas are examined. An overview of all current mobility patterns in these areas, including permanent relocation and immobility is also provided in this chapter. In Chapter 4 insights are provided into the space-time patterns of commuting and circular migration, the two dominant forms of population movement in Bangladesh. Following this, Chapter 5 elaborates on the pattern and process of commuting trips made by people with different occupations in Rampal.

Chapters 6 and 7 contain detailed examinations of the various characteristics of the commuters and circular migrants. Chapter 6 is concerned with individual characteristics such as age, education and occupation structure, while in Chapter 7 a comprehensive analysis of their household attributes such as family size and composition, landownership patterns, tenural status and economic conditions is provided. The reasons for commuting and migration and the advantages and disadvantages of these two types of movements, as stated by the movers themselves, are discussed in the latter part of Chapter 6.

In the final analytical chapter (Chapter 8) an initial attempt is made to explore relationships between levels of household socio-economic status and rates of commuting, migration, total mobility and immobility. The relevant literature relating to mobility behaviour

and social structure is reviewed and the system of social stratification in Muslim villages in Bangladesh is established. A set of criteria for classifying village households into several socio-economic classes is provided, and finally the relationship between mobility behaviour and socio-economic status of the surveyed population is examined empirically.

In Chapter 9 the major findings of the study are summarised and some implications for population relocation, urbanization, and other related developments are briefly discussed. Some avenues for future research are also suggested. Several appendices are included and these contain a number of basic data tables, a more detailed statement on the methodology of the village survey, and some of the questionnaires used for collection information in the field.

1.4.1 Conventions

In the text some local terms are used frequently so that the content of the thesis will be comprehensible to the people of Bangladesh. These terms are underlined and an explanation of their meaning is given in English when they first appear. The main terms are summarized in a Glossary.

The study also has retained 'standard' local measures such as the acre (1 acre = 0.4 hectare) and the mile (1 mile - 1.6 km) rather than using metric equivalents. Local measures of area and currency are

detailed in the Glossary.

With regard to the hierarchy of administrative units and their names, the study has followed conventions used in the 1981 population census. A point that should be noted concerns the spelling of the name of the capital city of Bangladesh. Since 1983 Dhaka (rather than Dacca) has been the official spelling and this is used throughout the thesis.

CHAPTER 2

MOBILITY IN BANGLADESH - CONCEPTUAL ISSUES AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The objective of this chapter is to raise some conceptual, theoretical, and methodological issues which are important in the context of analysis of population movement in Bangladesh and other densely populated regions in Asia. An extended review of the literature on mobility in Third World countries is not provided here; several recent studies contain comprehensive statements in this regard (see, for example, Prothero and Chapman 1985; Hugo 1981; Goldstein 1978; Bedford 1981a). After examining the problems of defining the forms of mobility relevant to this study, the history of population movement and urbanization in Bangladesh is reviewed briefly. In the final section, some limitations of the existing migration literature in Bangladesh are outlined. Discussion of the relationship between social stratification and population movement which has been the subject of much debate in recent literature, is deferred until Chapter 8.

2.1 DEFINITIONS OF POPULATION MOVEMENT

The lack of standard definitions of 'a move' and 'forms of movements' is an unsolved problem in migration research. Since the 1960s there have been a large number of micro-scale empirical inquiries into internal

population movement in Third World countries, especially in communities in South and Tropical Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands (see, for example, Prothero and Chapman 1985; Chapman and Prothero 1985). From these studies a new terminology has evolved for defining a wide variety of population movements, mostly local and regional, which could not be defined satisfactorily by conventional migration definitions derived largely from western experience. In developing this terminology, researchers have freely used space, time and purpose of movement criteria to define a variety of movements which still lack uniform meaning (Table 2.1). For this reason it is necessary to elaborate on the concepts of migration and circulation - the two essential components of population movement.

2.1.1 Mobility, migration and circulation

Mobility

The general term 'population mobility or movement' includes all kinds of spatial relocation from routine daily commuting to permanent migration that occur over various distances, and in which the duration of moves varies from a few hours to many years (UN 1970). It includes both reciprocal flows as well as the conventional linear type of migrations.

An operational definition of mobility depends on the types of research or types of data which are available, or both (Kosinski and Prothero 1975, 1).

Mobility involves a spatial relocation either without change of residence (such as commuters) or with change in place of residence (both temporary and permanent change). In either case a person who relocates for any purpose, such as for work, study, visit, recreation, shopping, etc. will be called a mover.

Migration

Following Zelinsky (1971, 225), population mobility can be divided into migration and circulation. The distinction is usually drawn on the basis of the degree of permanent change of residence which is again arbitrarily assessed by the researchers. The United Nations (1970, 1) defines migration as a change of residence from one civil division to another for a period of one year or more. Those movements for less than one year are regarded as non-migratory. Many empirical studies, on the other hand, define a migrant as a person who changes his residence for a period of time such as six months or one year (Table 2.1).

The essential characteristic of migration is that it involves a change of residence either temporarily or permanently. This is one of the basic differences between a 'mover' and a 'migrant'. Thus, all migrants are movers but some movers such as commuters and short-term visitors, shoppers etc. are not migrants. Recent mobility studies in Third World countries, have established that migration can be divided into linear and non-linear (circular or repetitive) patterns. The

Table 2.1

Time Criteria Used To Define Forms of Mobility

Source	'Commuting'	'Oscillation'	'Circular Migration'	Migration	Permanent Migration	Total time dimension
Hugo: 1978a (W. Java villages: Indonesia)	Regular back and forth journey for work or study		Continuous absence from the village up to 6 months	Continuous absence for 6 months or more	Total commitment with urban life leaving rural origin	Daily journey to 6 months or more
Mantra: 1981 Hamlets: Central Java)	6-24 hours absence from the hamlet		Movement for 1 day to less than 1 year	Intentional shift of residence for 1 year or more		6 hours to more than 1 year
Maude: 1981 (Villages: Northern Malaysia)	At least 1 day return per week from destination		Continuous absence for up to 12 months (but retain village household membership)	Continuous absence for more than 12 months (might return later)		Weekly journey to more than 1 year's absence
Bedford: 1973 (Vanuatu, former New Hebrides)		Absence for 1 day to less than 1 month (Routine movements for all purposes)	Absence for at least 1 month, with intention to return	'Permanent' move (no intention to return but may visit)		Routine daily to permanent migration
Young: 1977 (Papua New Guinea)		Routine daily movements to brief casual visits	Returned permanently after a period of living outside the village	Residing outside during survey		No specific range
Skeldon: 1977 (Peru)		(Pendular Migration) Absence from the community for up to 3 months or less	(Semi permanent migration with return) Absent for several years		Permanent change of residence, no return except visiting	Less than 3 months to permanent change of residence
Total time dimension	6 hours to 1 week absence	Daily to less than 3 months	1 day to several years absence	6 months to permanent migration		6 hours to permanent migration

former is very common in marriage migration while the latter is mostly related to the movements of working people, often from villages to towns.

Circulation

One of the definitions of circulation which is commonly quoted by researchers, is that proposed by Zelinsky (1971, 226):

> .... a great variety of movements, usually short-term, repetitive, or cyclical in nature, but all having in common the lack of any declared intention of a permanent or long-lasting change in residence.

Following Nelson (1976), Hugo (1979a, 74) mentioned that much of the mobility of individuals and families is often repetitive, cyclical or seasonal, to and from a 'permanent' place of residence. This has been demonstrated in a variety of Third World contexts.

In fact, 'circulation' includes all movements encompassed by the label 'population mobility' except for permanent migration (Hugo 1978b, 31). To distinguish 'circulation' and 'migration', Prothero and Chapman (1985, xvii) put it this way: "The critical distinction between 'migration' and 'circulation', the two major types of population mobility, denotes whether or not a return to place of origin is involved." Therefore a wide range of temporary migrants - from short-term, seasonal to quasi-permanent types - who intend to return to their place of origin, are in fact 'circulators'. With this in mind, many researchers have labelled them as 'circular migrants' (see Table

2.1).

2.1.2 Categories of circulation

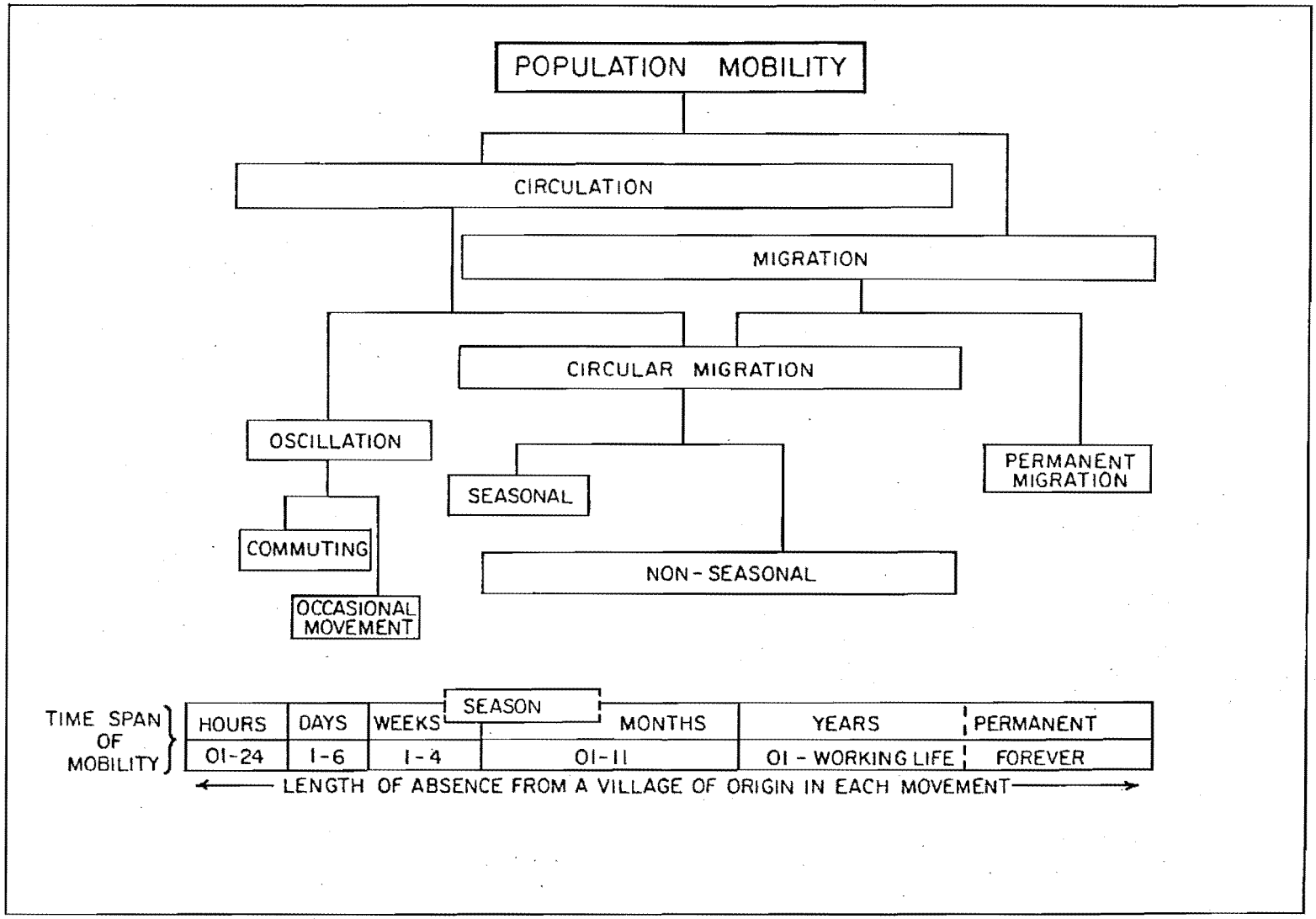
In the case of this study of mobility in Bangladesh, circulation is divided broadly into two categories: 'circular migration' which is closer to the general term 'migration', and 'oscillation' which includes frequent movement (e.g. commuting) and non-frequent movements or journeys (e.g. occasional visits, shopping etc.) (Figure 2.1). In the case of 'oscillation' or 'shuttle movement', the mover does not require any stable residence at his place of destination. In other words he oscillates from his home base. On the other hand, 'circular migrants' maintain dual residence - one (which is owned by the movers) at the place of origin from which they circulate and another (mostly rented) at the place of migration (mostly town) where they temporarily reside. Hence, in 'circular migration', residential change for a diverse range of periods is essential.

Circular migration

Functional definitions of 'circular migration' vary greatly. This reciprocal flow of people begins at a home base, proceeds to one or more specific locations, and ultimately terminates at the same original base (Roseman 1971, 591; Prothero and Chapman 1985; Mantra 1981). It is identified in the literature by a

Figure 2·1

A TYPOLOGY OF POPULATION MOBILITY OF WORKING PEOPLE ORIGINATING FROM VILLAGES IN BANGLADESH



confusing variety of terms: 'circular migration', 'return migration', 'wage-labour migration', 'seasonal migration', 'transhumance', 'target migration', 'sojourner movements', 'life cycle migration', and 'working-life migration' (Prothero and Chapman 1985; Hugo 1978b, 31).

In the field it is often necessary to divide circular migration into several types of movement as it involves a very diverse group of movers, ranging from seasonal migrants to moderate to long-term (or lifetime) migrants. Mantra (1981) divided such movers into commuters and circulators. Both these groups are again subdivided into regular, non-regular and seasonal types. However, under the same label of circulators, he includes occasional movers such as social visitors and ceremonial travellers with labour migrants and seasonal migrants. His classification, thus, does not highlight the intrinsic difference between 'movers' and 'migrants' as described earlier.

Many studies have stressed that the phenomenon of seasonal labour migration is one of the most common features of interal migration within the Third World countries. Despite that fact, studies done by Hugo (1978a) in Indonesia, Maude (1981) in Malaysia, Bedford (1973) in the New Hebrides (Vanuatu), and Young (1977) in Papua New Guinea, did not analyse such movement separately within their broad category of circular migration. In this study circular migration is sub-

divided into seasonal and non-seasonal types (Figure 2.1). Seasonal migration refers to seasonal movement for work which is controlled by the regional agro-climatic calendar. Non-seasonal circular migration includes a wide variety of short-term and long-term movements which are not tied to seasonal employment, and are mostly oriented towards urban centres.

In the field, researchers sometimes loosely use terms such as 'return', 'visit', and 'intention to return' to frame their respective definition of circular migration or repetitive movements. A circular migrant may visit his village home and family many times during his total migratory period, but usually he expects to return to his place of origin when his work at the place of destination(s) finishes. Similarly many circular migrants (mostly rural to urban) may not have any intention to return to their village of origin, but they are compelled to return because of their poor income which is not enough to meet the higher cost of living at cities and towns. However, the time of return home may be delayed because of the increasing population pressure on rural land and employment. These latter factors have made circular migration endemic in many parts of underdeveloped countries including Bangladesh.

Commuting

The largest number of movers are commuters. They mainly travel (daily, weekly or seasonally) for work, but also for casual visits, shopping and for study

(Chapman 1970). Commuting is largely influenced by local settings and situations, and as a result there is considerable diversity in the empirical definitions of commuting. Mantra (1981) in his Indonesian study subdivided the commuters into regular, non-regular and seasonal. Hugo (1978a, 126), on the other hand, considered only the rural to urban commuters. Bedford (1973), Young (1977) and Skeldon (1977) recorded commuting considering it within the broad base of 'oscillation' or 'pendular' movements which includes both commuting as well as some infrequent short visits or travels.

Given the large volume of commuters in the Third World countries, it can be hypothesised that with the development of infrastructure and changing mode of production in the countryside, commuting is gradually becoming a substitute for migration. In this context it is desirable to isolate this form of movement in the study of population movement within countries like Bangladesh. It may also be useful to examine categories of commuting, such as daily, weekly, seasonal daily, seasonal weekly.

2.2 SPACE, TIME AND LAND

2.2.1 Boundaries and distances

Most recent evidence on population mobility, and especially circular forms of movement, in developing countries has been derived from village level micro-

studies. The large numbers of movements recorded by the researchers reflect, in part, the nature of the boundary criteria used in the definition of a move. In several studies the fact that a person leaves a village is sufficient to qualify for a move. As the spatial characteristics of villages such as size, shape and relative location vary greatly from country to country and region to region, cross-cultural comparison and evaluation of mobility data using such definitions is difficult. In this context, it is necessary to present some important characteristics of Bangladeshi villages.

The Bangladeshi village

In Bangladesh, the village is the smallest administrative unit, revenue unit, and census unit.[1] In this part of the tropical monsoon world, villages are very densely populated and relatively small in size.[2] Rural settlements (residential) are close, compact, and

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1 As of mid 1981 Bangladesh had the following administrative hierarchy (Census 1981): 4 divisions, 21 districts, 71 sub-divisions, 477 thanas/upazilas, 4354 unions (rural), and 83,666 villages. Villages are defined mainly for administrative or census purposes and do not necessarily have sociological significance (Bertocci 1975).

2 The average area covered by a Bangladeshi village (excluding rivers, forests and urban settlements but including cropland) is nearly 320 acres (half of a square mile) and it varies greatly from a few acres to more than one square mile. Population size per village varies from less than a hundred to more than 10,000. Mean population size per village was around 900 persons in 1981. The average size of our 14 study villages is nearly one-third of a square mile and the range varies from 50 acres to more than 400 acres. The size of population, on average, was 795 (excluding non-residents).

contiguous; interrupted by tiny pieces of cultivated cropland. There are six to seven thousand village markets[3] which are of considerable importance in the context of commuting.

Village boundaries are highly irregular in shape and delineated by invisible criteria. Over the flat terrain of the country, the general pattern of rural settlements is almost uniformly scattered. Furthermore, there is a high level of economic and socio-cultural interdependence among village settlements. Another characteristic of Bangladeshi villages is that for village after village people talk the same language (Bengali) and come from the same ethnic stock. So, over the plain land of Bangladesh, there is virtually no physical or cultural barrier to restrain human mobility between neighbouring villages.

The above characteristics are important in the context of the spatial criteria used in mobility definitions. In many countries, including Bangladesh, village boundaries are for administrative convenience only. Unlike international boundaries, they have no direct influence upon human movement. In Bangladesh and most parts of South Asia, a village household has a number of agricultural plots at various locations (both within and outside the natal village) as well as at

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3 A centre of non-agricultural activities/services and retailing consumer goods (see section 2.3.3). It also serves as a social and cultural centre for the interaction of rural people.

different distances from the residence. Landless labourers also work at different agricultural plots. Thus, for their livelihood, even the farmers and farm workers have constantly been moving within and outside their home villages.

In this situation, boundary crossing criterion for defining local movers (such as commuters) has little meaning because most of the household-earners, whether farmer or non-farmer, very often move across their village boundary for livelihood purposes. In fact, given the varied size and shape of village settlements, this criterion for defining movers lacks uniformity. It aggravates the problem of comparing mobility data from region to region within a country and from country to country.

A minimum distance

In the light of the problem of using a boundary crossing criterion, a minimum distance was used to define a move. For any hierarchy of settlements, distance is an important variable for mobility analysis. Unlike the village boundary a minimum distance criterion assists in eliminating problems associated with the varied size and shape of the villages as well as the uneven distribution of population (Bogue 1969, 757). But the most critical problem is how the distance can be used to define a 'move' systematically in practice. In other words, within a village-based micro-space, where everybody is to some extent moving, how can we

functionally distinguish a mover from a stayer.

In the above situation a close watch is needed to sort out movers from stayers (although they sometimes work outside the village). Here, the present study has relied on a number of references on workers and consumers travelling behaviour (Baqee 1976) as well as the researcher's own experience from his previous rural surveys in a similar society. Based on a minimum distance of two miles (estimated from the mover's residence), the study recorded 1071 commuters (1064 males, 7 females) from 14 study villages. The number of commuters would be almost double if the study measured commuting across the village boundary irrespective of distance traversed by the villagers. In that situation, it could be hard to record any single stayer who never gets out of his home village for work.

2.2.2 The duration of moves

Another intrinsic problem of defining moves and movers is the dimension of time. This invisible criterion is more confusing than space and there is still lack of precision in our definitions based on the periodicity of different forms of movement, as well as the distinction between movers and non-movers, and 'circular migration', 'migration' and 'permanent migration'. In Table 2.1, the temporal domains of various types of movements which have been empirically defined by researchers in recent years are given.

Every form of movement identified here has a wide time-span and over the range of mobility, 'moves' vary from six hour absences to permanent migration or relocation.

In the case of absences for commuting, the time involved in a move varies from six hours to one week. For circular migration moves range in duration from one day to one year. The duration of moves termed migrations varies from six months to a lifetime move. These definitions suggest a high degree of temporal overlapping in mobility types (Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1). Singhanetra-Renard (1981) has also shown this is the case in her study of mobility to and from villages in northern Thailand. In such a situation, it is very difficult to generalize about the temporal definitions of different forms of mobility.

Avoiding a-priori definitions

Some researchers, such as Chapman (1970) and Singhanetra-Renard (1981), studied all sorts of moves involving some spatial relocation without imposing a-priori definitions or attempting to group forms of movement by type, such as commuting, oscillation, seasonal circulation, long-term circulation, etc. Both of them studied moves, not forms of movement. Chapman included all moves ranging from absences for 24 hours to permanent relocation. Singhanetra-Renard recorded all moves from six hour absences to more than ten years.

In these two studies, the researchers avoided the confusion which commonly arises because of diversity of

opinion over definitional issues. Commenting on Mantra's and Singhnetra-Renard's classification of moves with respect to space/time criteria and their temporal distinction between commuting, circulation and migration, Goldstein (1978, 48) said that they failed to standardize their concepts of circular movements.

Continuous absence

Hugo (1978a) and Maude (1981) have both used the term 'continuous absence' to qualify their time dimension which they used in their operational definitions (see Table 2.1). Defining 'circular migration' and 'migration', Hugo used continuous periods of absence for up to six months or more respectively, while Maude extended it up to 12 months or more. But it is not clear from their definitions whether they excluded home visits in the interim period, or not. If this is excluded, then these definitions have little meaning in the economic and cultural contexts of many parts of the Third World, including South Asia and Bangladesh.

During our field stay (in Bangladesh) we met many 'circular migrants' (non-seasonal) who visited their village homes more than 4 times a year. We also found a differential pattern of visiting frequency and duration of absence or circulation period among the household head and non-head members, student and job migrants, and married and unmarried migrants. The general pattern is that heads and married migrants visit

more frequently than non-head, unmarried and student migrants. This is quite understandable because the household heads are married and they have more responsibilities to their families in the village than their unmarried migrant and student mover counterparts. Hugo recognizes the difficulty of measuring circulation by adopting an absolute time scale which usually creates problems in developing a clear operational definition of circulation (Goldstein 1978, 43).

In the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) Bedford (1973) categorised all absences up to one month as 'oscillation' which includes routine daily movements to brief casual visits. This wide temporal scale highly overlaps with seasonal migration and short-term circular migration, and thus it has less significance in Indonesia (Hugo 1978a, 78), Bangladesh and probably other parts of South and Southeast Asia. Defining 'oscillation', Young (1977) in Papua New Guinea, on the other hand, avoided any absolute time scale.

Overlapping time scales

The present study avoids taking an absolute time scale for defining various types of movement. It was believed that absences for commuting could range from a few hours to several days. For seasonal 'circular migration', the time-span varies from more than one week to less than 3-4 months. For non-seasonal 'circular migration' it varies greatly from less than a months to more than 8-9 months.

2.2.3 The importance of land

Recent reviews of population movement in the Third World countries have demonstrated that the environment of circulation in densely settled agrarian regions in Asia is quite different from that of other regions, such as Africa, the islands of the Pacific, and less densely populated areas of Asia (Prothero and Chapman 1985; Bedford 1981a). Researchers have argued that the most important factor in this regard is availability of and ownership of land (Young 1984; Bedford 1981a).

An acute shortage

Unlike African and Melanesian societies, where population densities are comparatively low and land is communally owned, the most populous regions in Asia are characterised by acute shortage of land and an unequal distribution of this resource. A large proportion of rural households in Bangladesh and other parts of South and Southeast Asia such as India, Java, and the Philippines are either landless or own a small amount of land (Ghose and Griffin 1980). The numbers of these landless or near landless families are gradually increasing with the continued rapid growth of population and deterioration of socio-economic conditions in the rural areas. In addition to this, the rate of growth in the agricultural labour force in these crowded regions is found to be higher than the expansion of

employment in the agricultural sector (see Tables 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 for Bangladesh). As a result, it is an undeniable fact that millions of adult men in Asian villages remain unemployed, underemployed, and seasonally employed.

The real situation of acquiring land and securing employment on farms in the overpopulated villages in South and Southeast Asia is more complex than the simple fact outlined above. Boyce and Hartmann (1981, 26) have illustrated this in the context of rural Bangladesh:

> Rural Bangladesh is a scene of relentless struggles, pitting villager against villager. Above all, villagers compete for control of land. To the poor man, land means the ability to reap the rewards of his own labour. To the rich man, land means the ability to profit from the labour of others. The competition is unequal, with winners and losers largely determined in advance. Those who command land, resources and markets prosper, while those who have only their labour to sell slowly waste until they die. Those in the middle enjoy a certain amount of mobility. A few aggressive individuals, ... may manage to rise in the economic hierarchy. But for each middle peasant who rises, many others fall.

Dual occupations and incomes

In Bangladesh, the massive rural surplus workforce which includes landless labourers, small peasants, part-time farmers, and educated youths, has much relevance for the current explosion of circular mobility. Due to the scarcity of land and employment, and the unequal distribution of these two resources, particularly the land, most of the rural households

usually deploy their family labour both on and off the farm, because they are unable to gain an adequate income from either farming or wage labour. An empirical study has revealed that in Bangladesh, 80 percent of farmers have off-farm employment in addition to their farm work (Ali 1980). The families earn off-farm income by sending their members to urban, semi-urban and rural market centres which constitute the destinations for rural circulation (Section 2.3).

Many rural families or individuals, especially from the lower economic strata of village society, are locked into the dual occupation system and they depend on village and town for livelihood (Forbes 1981). In the urban or semi-urban areas, they mostly find work in the informal sector - work suited to their poor skills as well as to the agricultural calendar in their home village. Individuals from the higher economic echelons are likely to be better educated and come from large families, the families which have extra man-power and are able to spare their educated youths for a longer period from the village. This group of working people from the rural areas tend to engage in permanent jobs in the urban informal sector (Hugo 1984; Young 1984) and are less likely to commute or make frequent visits associated with agricultural calendar.

The patterns and processes of circular mobility associated with land shortage, land inequality and agricultural structure are indeed very complex and vary

from one region to another. Very few studies, however, attempt to explain this complexity, although many of us agree with Chapman and Prothero (1977, 5) that 'Circulation, rather than being transitional or ephemeral is a time-honored and enduring mode of behaviour, deeply rooted in a great variety of cultures and found at all stages of socio-economic change'.

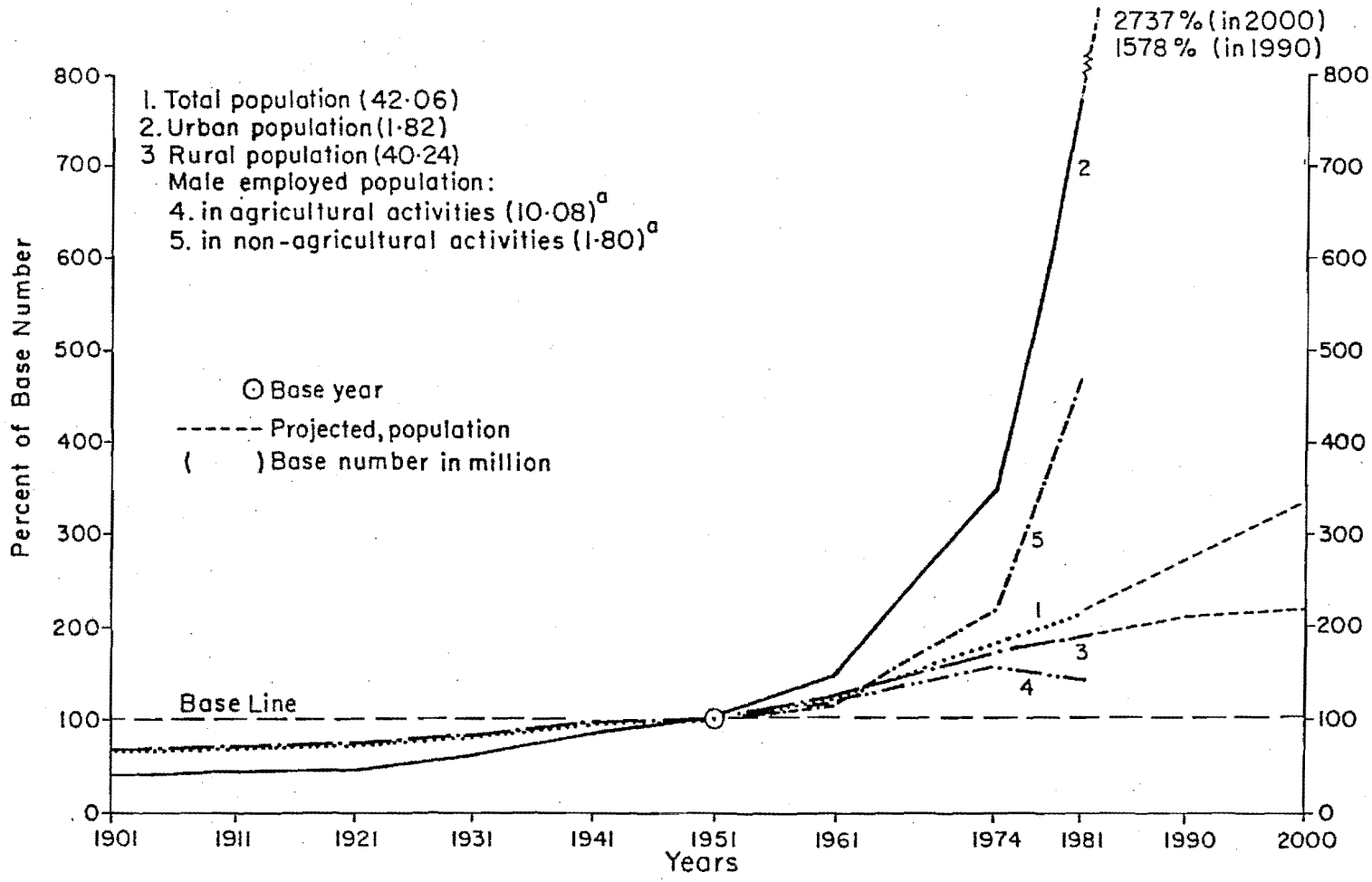
2.3 POPULATION MOBILITY AND URBANISATION IN BANGLADESH: AN OVERVIEW

Traditionally, the people of Bengal have been regarded for a long time as a "closed" nation, and the region that is now known as Bangladesh has had a very low level of urbanization. Although the population of Bangladesh continues to remain predominantly rural resident (Figure 2.2), there is undeniable evidence that major changes are taking place which are generating accelerating rates of human mobility and related to this, higher levels of urbanization. With only 15 million, or 15 percent of the total population of almost 100 million, living in urban and semi-urban centres, Bangladesh has a considerable potential for substantial increase in the size of the urban population through natural increase and redistribution of people from rural to urban places.

After partition of the Indian sub-continent in 1947, levels of rural out-migration remained very low in Bangladesh until the end of the 1950s. During the 1960s population movement within the country gained

Figure 2·2

MEASURES OF POPULATION GROWTH IN BANGLADESH SINCE 1901



Data sources: Census data (projected population is based on medium growth rate see Census 1981,154)

a. Population 12 years and above (in 1951 and 1961 censuses) 10 years and above (in 1974 and 1981 censuses)

momentum and since the early 1970s the mobility of rural people in particular has intensified considerably. These trends since 1947 cannot be explained without referring to the pre-partition situation with regard to population movement and related phenomena. Until 1947, Bangladesh was a part of undivided India and hence its internal migration field extended over a vast empire.

2.3.1 Population movement in East Bengal and East Pakistan

The situation before 1947

Bangladesh is a long-settled area mainly due to rich agricultural lands on which human settlement began to flourish thousands of years ago (Majumdar 1943, 562; Davis 1951, 23). For many centuries, even up until the end of the 19th century, more people migrated to what was then East Bengal than emigrated to other parts of the Indian sub-continent (Rashid 1977, 512). In medieval India there was a saying "there was a way in but no way out of Bengal" (UN 198?, 5). In fact, before the start of the twentieth century, the people of this region of particularly fertile soils hardly felt any necessity to migrate elsewhere in order to derive a livelihood. People of Bengali origin were less likely to work in the plantations (such as tea, coffee, rubber) which employed millions of Indians in Assam and Darjeeling in India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and other parts of the British empire in Asia, Africa and the Pacific (Davis 1951; Georgo 1966; World Bank 1981).

It was not until the early 1900s when the Bengalis began to experience pressure of population on a scarce land resource that the balance of migration across the boundary of East Bengal turned towards net losses rather than gains (Figure 2.3). This process of readjustment of population numbers and densities in relation to available productive resources and rural employment opportunities in India was abruptly terminated in 1947 by the creation of Pakistan. As a result the vast internal migration field of the East Bengal people suddenly telescoped to a small area and the potential for emigration from this densely settled agrarian region was severely restricted.

Another factor which contributed to relatively low levels of migration away from rural communities in East Bengal before the twentieth century was the region's hinterland status within the empire of India. For a long period major administrative, commercial, and industrial centres were located outside the region. Even during the period when East Bengal was part of a united Pakistan (from 1947-71), the main local centre, Dhaka, was a provincial capital with limited commercial and industrial infrastructure. In 1947, when Bangladesh lost free access to Calcutta, then the commercial and industrial capital of the sub-continent, the main route of rural-urban traffic was also disrupted. Because of its proximity to Calcutta, and also because East Bengal has long been regarded as an

Figure 2·3
INDICES OF POPULATION CHANGE IN BANGLADESH, 1911-1961

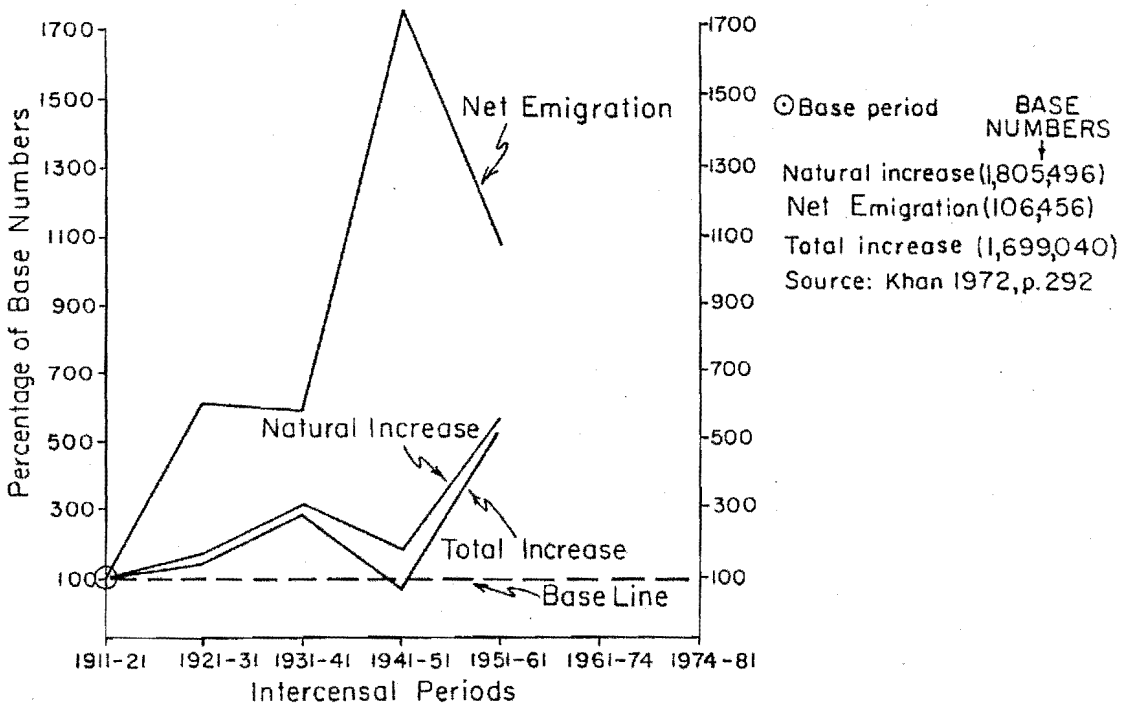
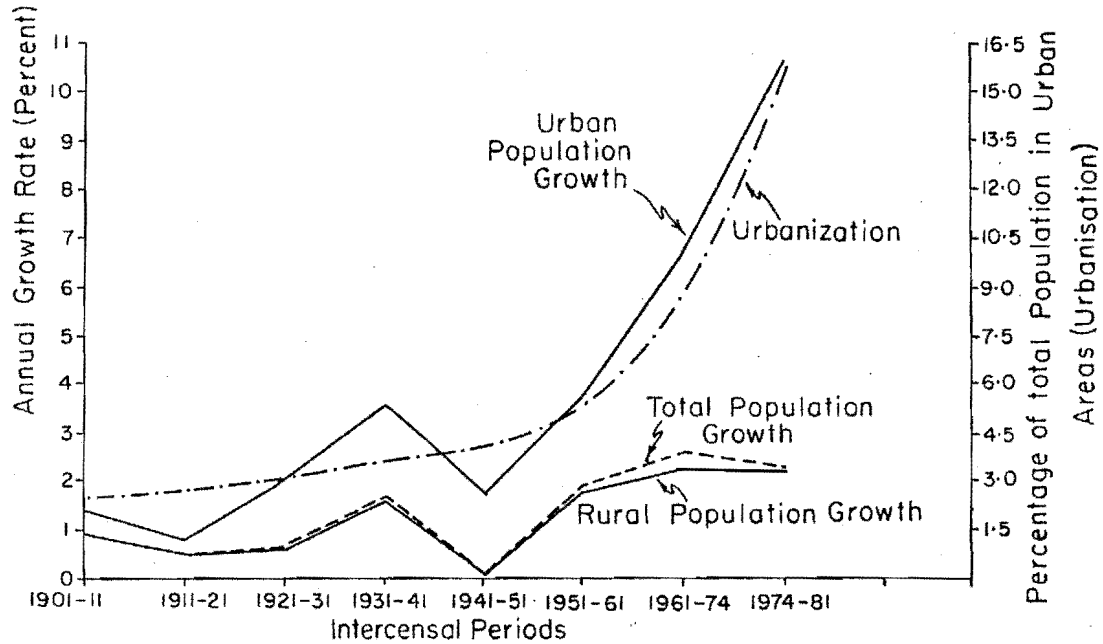


Figure 2·4
AVERAGE ANNUAL GROWTH RATE OF POPULATION[1] AND PERCENTAGE IN URBAN AREAS IN BANGLADESH, 1901-1981



1. Average annual growth rate (exponential) of rural, urban and total population

Data source: census 1981; UN 1981 a, 24

agrarian region in India, the systematic development of urban and industrial centres had not taken place in East Bengal.

Partition and underdevelopment, 1947-1971

Partition of the sub-continent not only restricted the spatial extent of migration of Bangladeshi people, it also caused a great deal of socio-economic disruption by dislocating three to four million people within a very short time. At partition, Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) gained 699,079 muhajirs (Muslim immigrants) from India (census of Pakistan, 1951) and in return lost a large number of Hindu emigrants (approximately three to four times the number of Muslim immigrants). But the real loss was the sudden mass emigration of skilled and educated Hindus, business folk, urban dwellers, and land owning groups. Unlike India and Pakistan (then West Pakistan) Bangladesh lost qualified people and received in return relatively unskilled immigrants, mostly peasants (Davis 1951). Before partition, the Hindu community dominated in business, administration, and various professions and services in Bangladesh. They were more wealthy, urban and literate than the Muslim communities. The departure of Hindus from East Pakistan continued for several years after the partition and by the early 1950s most of the comparatively wealthy and well-educated Hindus had moved to India.

The consequences of this emigration of rich and better-qualified people from different sectors of the economy were massive capital and brain-drains. These, in turn, indirectly assisted West Pakistani ruling elites and merchants to fill the gap created by Hindu emigration. The loss of access to Calcutta also fostered economic domination of East Pakistan by its Western counterpart. After the creation of Pakistan, economic and development policies were designed in such a way that it made the East a hinterland of the West. The economy of West Pakistan was able to grow at a faster rate partly through profitable exploitation of East Pakistan's resources, such as jute and tea (UN 1980a), and partly through having a lucrative market in the East for manufactured goods. In brief, the economic disparity between the two parts of Pakistan became so acute that the net result for the eastern region was little different from the economic exploitation of East Bengal under colonial rule in India. This economic exploitation did not end until the war of liberation which led Bangladesh to independence in 1971 (Khan, A.R. 1972 cited in UN 1980a).

Intra-rural mobility

It was stated earlier that Bangladesh has had high rural population densities for a long time. Available information clearly indicates that rural to rural migration was the dominant stream of internal

population movement in Bangladesh, and peasants constituted the bulk of the movers (George 1966; Davis 1951; Khan 1972). During the first five decades of the twentieth century, the movement of peasants from Bangladesh to neighbouring regions such as Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura, where large tracts of agricultural land were still available for cultivation, dominated these rural population transfers. The partition of India severely restricted this peasant migration, although it has been argued (Ali 1983) that after partition the flow of peasants to neighbouring regions in India did not stop totally (Ali 1983). However, the flow diminished significantly due in large measure to the rise of violent anti-immigration protests among the native people in those regions.

The net effect of partition was to reduce the range of potential rural destinations for village people in Bangladesh. This did not reduce the volume of intra-rural population movement immediately - indeed census results suggest that the level of lifetime migration[4] increased slightly from 2.3 percent to 3.5 percent from 1951 to 1961. But by 1974 it had fallen back to 3.4 percent suggesting some stabilization in this measure of internal migration in Bangladesh (Elahi

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4 A person whose place of residence (district, state, province etc.) at the census date differs from his place of birth is a lifetime migrant. Such people comprise the lifetime migration streams (UN 1970) and the magnitude of this movement is commonly expressed in terms of the percentage of lifetime migrants in the total population (Census 1974, p.25).

1980). The spatial pattern of lifetime migration has been closely related to the population density gradient. Western and north-western districts, which are relatively less densely populated have received more in-migrants than other regions of the country (Obaidullah 1967; Krishnan and Rowe 1978). By the early 1960s, when these regions were also experiencing pressure of population on available resources rural lifetime migration began to stabilize.

2.3.2 Migration and urbanisation

The rapid expansion of rural-urban migration during the 1960s and 1970s, needs to be viewed in the context of the country's demographic, economic, and political background. As we have noted already, Bangladesh is a rural country in terms of its population distribution. The role of rural-urban migration in urbanization has only been observed recently.

Urban population size

Between 1901 and 1961 the proportion of the population that was rural resident fell by only 2.8 percent, i.e. from 97.6 percent in 1901 to 94.8 percent in 1961 (Ahmad 1976). During the next two decades, however, the proportion of people living in rural areas fell by a further 10.1 percent, reflecting a significant change in the patterns of migration, urbanization and population redistribution. During the 1960s and 1970s the net flow of lifetime migration changed from a rural

to an urban orientation. In 1951, for example, eleven of the 17 districts in East Pakistan recorded net lifetime migration gains. Most of those districts were rural. By 1981, only eight districts out of a total of 21 were gaining more lifetime migrants than they were losing, and 76 percent of the gains were in Dhaka and Chittagong - the two most urbanized districts in Bangladesh.

Given the vast number of people living in a very compact territory, the importance of urbanization cannot be understood solely in terms of the proportion of the population living in towns. Although Bangladesh remains one of the least urbanized countries in the world, the size of the urban population is enormous (13 or 14 million in 1981). It is as big as the total population of many nations like Australia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Nepal etc. Between 1901 and 1981 the urban population increased approximately 20 times - from 700,000 to 13.2 million (census unadjusted figures). Over the same period the rural population trebled from 28 to 76 million.

Urban population growth

During the last two intercensal periods (i.e. 1961-74 and 1974-81), the annual growth rates of urban population were 6.6 and 10.6 percent respectively (Census 1981, Table 4, p.36). These rates are extremely high by world standards as evident from the United Nations' reports (1980b, 1982, Islam 1985). At

present rates of growth the urban population of Bangladesh will double in less than 10 years.

There are three factors which contribute to the growth of urban population - (i) natural increase of population, (ii) out-migration from rural areas, and (iii) spatial expansion of urban areas by boundaries changes of existing centres and/or the creation of new urban areas. In the case of Bangladesh, the principal component of growth is the out-migration from rural areas. Results from various studies and the 1981 census report suggest that at least half of the total increase of urban population since 1961 was caused by rural-urban migration (Chaudhury 1980; Khan 1982; Centre for Urban Studies 1982).

In some of the larger cities, such as Dhaka and Khulna, in-migrants accounted for almost three-quarters of the total increase in population during the 1961-74 census period (Khan 1982). During the last intercensal period (1974-1981) 700,000 people a year were flooding into the cities and towns - the equivalent of almost 2000 people every single day. In the next decade the volume of in-migration is expected to rise substantially according to projections of urban populations for 1990 and beyond (Figure 2.2).

The rapid increase in both rural-urban movement and the size of the urban population, especially after the independence, was stimulated by expansion of trade, commerce, manufacturing and administration, and has been

accompanied by rising expectations for a better life in town in the face of deteriorating rural conditions (Khan 1982). Despite heavy reliance upon traditional agriculture as a means of livelihood, significant changes in the occupation or employment structure are gradually taking place in Bangladesh. This is demonstrated in Tables 2.2 to 2.5. The data from these tables clearly indicate that the relative share of agriculture as a means of livelihood is decreasing.

It is also evident that in the agricultural sector, there exists a substantial un/underemployed labour force which is increasing much more rapidly than the provision of new jobs. Population pressure and an unequal distribution of resources, especially land, are two important factors which are causing many villagers to leave rural areas. As employment prospects in agriculture worsen, a greater number of villagers are moving to the cities, towns and other hubs of non-agricultural activities (e.g. rural markets, thana centres etc.).

Urban movement and urban centres

Conventional definitions of 'migration' and 'urban' do not capture adequately the essence of either rural-urban movement or the process of urbanization in Bangladesh or elsewhere in the sub-continent. In Bangladesh, much of the movement between rural areas and urban centres, which is related to economic reasons, has been temporary and cyclical in nature. It has involved

Table 2.2

Bangladesh: Estimates of Employment and Unemployment 1972/73 and 1978/79

	1972/73	1978/79	Growth rate (Percentage)
Total labour force (millions)	26.0	30.0	2.4
Employment (millions)	16.1	19.2	3.0
Unemployment and underemployment (millions)	9.9	10.8	1.5
Share of total labour force (percentage)	(38.1)	(36.0)	
Agricultural labour force (millions)	19.9	22.9	2.4
Share of total labour force (percentage)	(76.5)	(76.3)	
Employment (millions)	11.9	13.0	1.5
Unemployment and underemployment (millions)	8.0	9.9	3.6
Share of agricultural labour force (percentage)	(40.2)	(43.2)	

Source: BBS, Monthly Economic Situation (August 1979), Quoted from UN (1980a, 101).

Table 2.3

Employment by Economic Sector and Total Labour Force 1975 and 2000

	Million man-years	
	1975	2000
Employment in:		
Agriculture	15	20
Manufacturing	1	4
Commerce	1	2
Services	2	6
All others (including construction)	1	4
Total employment	20	36
Unemployment	8	20
Total labour force	28	56

Source: Faaland and Parkinson 1976a, 85.

Note: The figures for 1975 are rough estimates only, based on incomplete information. They must be considered only as indicative of the structure of occupations rather than absolute levels.

Table 2.4

Ratio of Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Labour Force by Employment Status, 1972/73, 1978/79 and 2000

(percentages)

Employment status	1972/73	1978/79	2000
Employed	74:26	68:32	56:44
Un/underemployed	81:19	92:8	*
Total labour force (in millions)	26.0	30.0	56.0

Source: Calculated from the statistics given in Tables 2.2 and 2.3.

* Could not be calculated from data in Table 2.3.

Table 2.5

Sectoral Shares of Gross Domestic Product in Different Years, Bangladesh

(percentages)

Sectors	1969/70	1972/73	1974/75	1976/77	1979/80	1981/82	1984/85[a]
Agriculture	62.4	60.1	58.7	52.6	49.4	48.8	47.0
Industry	8.3	7.3	7.4	10.5	10.8	10.7	10.1
Construction	4.6	3.2	3.5	3.5	3.7	4.2	4.8
Power, gas and water	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.7
Transport and communications	4.6	5.3	5.2	5.6	7.0	6.7	6.8
Trade and commerce	7.4	7.8	7.7	13.5	10.1	8.7	8.8
Housing	4.4	5.2	4.9	4.4	7.7	7.5	7.2
Public administration	2.4	2.9	4.9	2.7	2.3	4.0	5.0
Finance	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.8	1.7	1.8	1.7
Professional and miscellaneous services	5.9	7.3	6.5	6.1	6.9	7.2	7.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Except for 1976/77, data were obtained from Quarterly Economic Review of Bangladesh, The Economist Intelligence Unit, Annual Supplement 1977, 1981, 1984 and 1985 [original source; Monthly Statistical Bulletin of Bangladesh, BBS]. For 1976/77, Statistical Yearbook of Bangladesh, 1979, p.342, BBS.

a Provisional.

movement of individual males who usually leave their families in the village and retain village citizenship as well as membership in town. The movers who practise this "bilocality" are gradually increasing and make up a progressively larger proportion of the urban population (Skeldon 1984).

The process of circulation between rural and urban or semi-urban places also appears to be dominated by short-term and short-distance movement. This has been facilitated by improvement of rural-urban transport, and the proliferation of urban and semi-urban centres due to the decentralization of administration and some urban services and utilities, especially electricity facilities. In addition there has been a trend towards dependency among rural households on two or more income sources, one on-farm and the others off-farm. It is generally believed that much of the short-term and short-distance circular movements cannot be captured by census surveys, as the census traditionally measures mobility on the basis of statements about place of birth or place of previous/last residence. As a result, in many Third World countries including Bangladesh, census statistics generally underestimate the magnitude of rural-urban mobility and the exposure of rural populations to urban life.

Another aspect of census statistics must also be taken into consideration and this is the way in which urban places are defined. In Bangladesh the total

number of urban localities increased from 78 in 1961 to 108 in 1974. But in 1981, the number jumped from 108 to approximately 500 (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 1984, 2) of which more than 350 localities were given an urban status by applying a new definition.

In previous censuses, places were classed as 'urban' if they had a Municipality, a Town Committee or a Cantonment Board. Such places had a continuous collection of houses, a population of at least 5000 persons, and public utilities such as roads, street lighting, water supply, sanitation, sewerage system, etc. They were also normally centres of trade and commerce with a population mostly non-agricultural and having a higher literacy rate than was found in the surrounding rural areas. An area which had the above characteristics but less than 5000 population was also considered as an urban centre in special cases.

In 1981 all the thana headquarters irrespective of their area and level of urbanization, as well as haats and bazars having electricity, which were not covered under the previous definition, were classed as "urban" (Census 1981, 35). The exact numbers and detailed characteristics of these newly defined urban centres in 1981 have not yet been published. But the census authority has reported that the new urban localities accounted for nearly 30 percent of the total urban population in 1981 (13.2 million) or roughly about 4 million people (ibid, 36).

The urban status of all thana headquarters which lie within the countryside and some rural markets having electricity is indeed a matter of great debate among the population planners, migration experts and others. But what is more important, especially in the context of population mobility and urbanization in Bangladesh, is that the 1981 census, for the first time, has recognized the thana headquarters and rural markets as an important locus of village out-migration. The significance of these two hubs of non-agricultural activities becomes far greater if we also consider patterns of local movements (such as daily, weekly or bi-weekly commuting) of village people (see Chapters 4 and 5). As Skeldon (1984) has noted: "if only the longer-distance flows are considered as migration, the population of South Asia appears relatively immobile but the whole situation changes if the local movers are included."

2.3.3 Rural service centres

Future patterns of population movement and the expansion of urban areas in Bangladesh will depend to a great extent on the development of two kinds of rural service centres: the village markets (haats) and thana headquarters. The essential characteristics of these low-order central places in the Bangladesh urban hierarchy are outlined below. Their significance in the context of rural mobility patterns is elaborated on in subsequent chapters.

Haats

There are more than 6500 village markets in Bangladesh scattered over the country. The haat usually meets once or twice per week following a definite schedule which is synchronized with local marketing cycles. These village markets form the 1st order in the hierarchy of service centres (or central places) in Bangladesh. They vary greatly in size, function and zone of influence (i.e. size of hinterland). Every village market has both permanent shops and temporary stalls. On a haat-day (market day), a periodic market attracts a larger number of temporary stalls. Many village markets have other infrastructure such as a post office, schools, mosques and a union council office (lowest form of local government office).

The larger trading centres (often known as gonjos) have a greater number of permanent commercial functions (including banks and small industries) and non-commercial infrastructures. They have a better transport network. Some of these big markets are attached to the thana headquarters and they have characteristics of semi-urban settlements with a few urban features such as brick buildings, paved streets, and electricity.

The zone of influence or size of hinterland of a particular village market mainly depends on the size of the market and its functional characteristics. Daily

markets or bazars have smaller hinterlands than periodic markets or haats. The latter attract large numbers of tradesmen, rural artisans, farmers, middlemen and consumers from longer distances. Generally a small market serves an area within a two to three mile radius of a village (Islam and Hossain 1975, 55), while an average size market extends its service up to a five miles radius (Rashid 1977, 469). Overlapping in service areas of neighbouring markets is common in every rural region. The larger trading centres (gonjos) or the specialized rural markets (e.g. cattle markets) have larger hinterlands compared with the haats.

Thana headquarters

The functions of a thana headquarters are different from those of a village market. It is an administrative centre for an area of 125-150 square miles covering, on average, around 200 villages and 200,000 people. The centre is well recognized as the 2nd order in the hierarchy of service centres in Bangladesh. Primarily it is an administrative centre, a police station and a revenue unit. Very recently the centre has been upgraded by reorganizing its administrative structure and adding a number of new functions. Gradually, the name 'thana' is also being changed into 'upazila' (sub-district).

The numbers of thana are very small as compared to the numbers of rural markets. In 1981 there were 469 thanas (as against more tan 6500 haats and bazars)

in Bangladesh and less than 400 of them were within the countryside. Thus the thana localities usually provide villagers with a small number of jobs (as compared to village markets) and these jobs are mostly suited for educated people. Unlike the village market, a thana centre has residential plots as many thana staff are migrants (migrated from distant places which lie within or outside the thana where the migrant is working). The importance of thanas or upazilas, as mentioned before, is increasing as more functions and public utilities are added (Schroeder 1985). With concentrations of education institutions, business enterprises, and professional services, thana have acquired a more obvious "urban" appearance. Thana centres, along with rural markets, have thus assumed greater significance as destinations for work-related migration flows in recent years, as well as contributing substantially to the urbanization of Bangladesh's population.

2.4 MIGRATION STUDIES IN BANGLADESH

Compared with the other two demographic processes (fertility and mortality), population movement has been a neglected area of research in Bangladesh. Recently a number of researchers have noted the paucity of migration literature when they have been reviewing studies available on this part of South Asia (Krishnan and Rowe 1978; Simmons et al. 1977; Islam et al. 1982; Choguill 1983; and Skeldon 1984). Detailed empirical

research on internal migration began very recently and the published literature gives us an incomplete picture of the total mobility behaviour for the population of Bangadesh as well as for any particular movement form or stream (Stoeckel et al. 1972; Chaudhury and Curlin 1975; Chaudhury 1978a, 1983; Centre for Urban Studies 1982, forthcoming).

2.4.1 Some limitations of the available literature

A focus on streams

Studies such as those by Obaidullah 1967, Khan 1972, Haq 1974, Krishnan and Rowe 1978, based on conventional census data, have provided few insights beyond their stated objectives of either describing the intercensal and interdistrict (or division) migration pattern, or outlining determinants of migration (mostly age and sex), or attempting to prove some simple statistical models in the context of Bangladesh (Haq 1974). Findings from these studies reveal little about the local social, economic, political and environmental context within which individuals make their mobility decisions (Bedford 1981a).

Some urban surveys of squatters, slums, urban poor, and vagrants have partly discussed the migration decision process of the lower socio-economic classes of urban in-migrants (Centre for Urban Studies 1976, 1977, 1979, 1983; Begum 1979; Qadir 1975; Farouk et al. 1978). Studies which have focused mainly on urbanization or

population redistribution have also thrown some light on rural-urban movement (Chaudhury 1980; Khan 1982; Islam 1978; Elahi 1972, 1980). However, much information on rural-urban relocation or circulation, especially between villages and small or intermediate towns, remains unexplained since most studies have focused on the large cities.

Most of the studies have mentioned that internal population movement in Bangladesh (as elsewhere in South Asia) is essentially a local phenomenon and that the bulk of the movement occurs within the rural areas. This general statement is derived from the place of birth statistics which have been collected in every decennial census. This is evident from the writing of Krishnan and Rowe (1978) where the authors showed that since 1951 the geographical pattern of internal movement has remained nearly the same - a Westward/North-Westward movement.

Using longitudinal data on vital events (birth, death and migration) in 101 villages of Matlab thana, Chaudhury and Curlin (1975) found the converse was true. They showed (1975, 208) that the bulk of the rural out-migrants (mostly male) move to urban areas. The authors defined an out-migrant as one who moved outside the study area and had not returned in six months time. This definition, thus, excluded many short-term movements from and to the village, such as commuting, seasonal circulation and other periodic movements. In

another recent study of rural out-migration, Chaudhury (1978a) adopted a similar time dimension for defining out-migrants and thereby he deliberately excludes circular migrants and seasonal migrants. Therefore, in Bangladesh, a large number of short-term, periodic circulators and commuters have been ignored by researchers as well as by census surveys.

A focus on differentials

A common feature of migration studies in Bangladesh, is that the researchers have invariably tried to focus on migration differentials. Using the same source of longitudinal data (vital events of Matlab thana), Stoeckel et al. (1972) examined migration selectivity, destinations, and reasons for migration, while Chaudhury and Curlin (1975) have extended their analysis to gain more insights into the dynamics of rural migration. The latter study makes a modest attempt to explain the trend, pattern and variation in net migration, the selectivity of in- and out-migrants, reasons underlying the in and out movement, destination of the out-migrants, and some push-pull factors for migration of both sexes. These two studies (particularly the one by Chaudhury and Curlin) have provided a considerable amount of information on the individual's age, sex, marital status, occupation etc., as well as his household size and type.

The findings are to some extent common to that of other hard-pressed agrarian regions of South and

Southeast Asia. A significant number of out-migrants from the study area return to their villages and this indicates some circulation or return migration which has been recently (indirectly) noted by Krishnan and Rowe (1978). They found that the district losing population through migration receives more members in the 50-59 age group than do the districts gaining immigrants.

2.4.2 Towards a more relevant focus

More recently Chaudhury (1978a, 1983) has contributed significant factual information on rural out-migration in Bangladesh. The main objective was to understand the factors affecting rural out-migration at the village as well as the individual level. The Todaro hypothesis of rural-urban income differentials was found inadequate to explain rural-urban migration, and an alternative hypothesis highlighting intra-rural inequality as the main cause and serious consequence of rural emigration was tested in these studies (see Connell et al. 1976; Dasgupta 1975; Lipton 1980).

Chaudhury found a U-shaped pattern in the distributions for rural out-migrants in terms of income, landholding and educational categories. This pattern gives us a broad picture of the out-migration trend of the rural classes (upper, middle and lower). However, it does not provide us with an adequate picture of the mobility of rural people in Bangladesh because Chaudhury did not seek information on two very important types of movement: commuting and seasonal migration. When a

wider range of movement types is taken into consideration, new dimensions emerge in both the pattern and process of population movement in rural Bangladesh. These dimensions form the substance of the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONTEXT OF POPULATION MOBILITY IN RURAL BANGLADESH

As we have seen from the review of published research concerned with population movement in Bangladesh, there are no studies which give an adequate account of the total mobility behaviour of Bangladeshis. The primary aims of this chapter are firstly to introduce selected aspects of the "setting" for mobility in rural Bangladesh, and secondly to describe the main types of population movement recorded for people living in 14 villages in three rural localities.

Some characteristics of the physical environment, population and agriculture are outlined in the first section. Description and analysis of land tenure, social structure and economic status is deferred until Chapters 7 and 8. In the second part of this chapter, the three major forms of population circulation, two of which are examined in depth in subsequent chapters, are introduced. This is followed by a more detailed discussion of three aspects of the total mobility system which do not form part of the substantive analysis elsewhere in the thesis - permanent relocation, immobility and the movement behaviour of rural women.

3.1 THE ENVIRONMENT OF MOBILITY

People living in the 14 villages under study largely depend on agriculture for a livelihood, and they

share a common language, culture, climate, history and modes of production with the population of most other parts of Bangladesh. This can be understood in the context of the country's small size and its undiversfied physio-climatic features. In addition to location, the characteristics which differ most from one region to another, are density of population, practice of farming and development of physical and social infrastructure such as transport, education, and financial institutions (Table 3.1). The most striking features of Rampal are an extremely high man-land ratio, intensive farming of vegetable cash crops and proximity to the country's largest urban and industrial agglomeration. Chandina also has a few notable characteristics such as high density of population and intensive cultivation of IRRI rice. Compared with these two survey areas, the Sakhipur region is backward in terms of agriculture, accessibility and other dimensions of rural development. Perhaps for such reasons, Sakhipur is relatively less densely populated than Rampal and Chandina.

3.1.1 The physical setting

Rampal

Many of the opportunities and constraints of livelihood in the survey communities are related to the area's physical setting, including its geographical location. Rampal is situated in an old floodplain of the Meghna river. This older alluvium is one of the most productive physiographic regions for agriculture in

Table 3.1

Some Comparative Statistics, Study Areas and the Nation, 1981.

Variables		Rampal	Chandina	Sakhipur	All study areas	Bangladesh[a]
Total study households (HHs)		684	608	649	1941	-
Sex ratio of total population (male per 100 female)		114	101	103	106	106
Sex ratio of resident population[b]		101	94	91	96	103
Average household size		6.3	6.6	6.3	6.4	5.7
Average no. of income earners per household (HH)		1.6	1.5	1.7	1.6	1.3
Average no. of dependents per HH		4.7	5.1	4.6	4.8	4.5
Dependency ratio: Demographic (in percent)		116	105	98	106	109
Percentage of males economically active (all ages)		47.1	45.3	50.4	47.6	49.9
Literacy rate[c] (% of population over 4 years)	Male	58	77	58	64	31(41.1)
	Female	41	48	33	41	16(23.7)
	Total	50	62	46	53	23.8(32.7)
Percent of male literate persons who completed at least SSC level		14.2	15.4	14.5	14.8	11.4(rural)
Density of population[d] (per km²/mile²)		2836/7345	1153/2985	554/1434	1044/2705	624/1617
Density of population per square km/mile of arable land		3547/9187	1420/3678	719/1863	1256/3254	1050/2719
Per capita arable land (in acres)		0.067	0.173	0.401	0.212	0.23
Percentage of HH own no arable land		34.9	19.6	28.6	28.0	34.2
Percentage of HH near landless (own up to 0.50 acre per HH)		42.1	19.6	17.6	26.8	33.3[e]
Concentration of land (Gini coefficient)		0.737	0.586	0.768	0.756	n.a.
Household per capita income (in taka per year)		2686	2980	2816	2833	n.a.
Concentration of income (per capita) (Gini coefficient)		0.337	0.359	0.462	0.392	n.a.
Intensity of cultivation or agriculture[g]		212	255	181	214	153[f](1981)
Intensity of cash crop cultivation[h]		139	46	94	90	n.a.
Agricultural production per acre (in taka)		9917	10065	2468	7464	n.a.
Agricultural land value (in '000' taka per acre at 1981 price)		90-210	80-160	10-30	10-210	n.a.

Note: The statistics for variables 16-20 are based on 431 sample households (22 percent of 1941 households). Where data for Bangladesh as a whole are not available this is indicated by the letters n.a.

a For reference year and source see Appendix 1.

b Excludes village absentees or non-residents (see Figure 3.2).

c The definition of literacy differs from census to census. In 1961, it included all those persons who could at least read; in the 1974 census, the definition was restricted to those who were able to read and write in any language. Following an international standard, the last census (in 1981) used a further definition which embraced only the people who could write a letter (census 1981, p79). The present study followed the 1974 census definition; so when comparing literacy levels of the study population with national literacy levels, special attention should be given to changes in definition. However, the 1981 census also provided other statistics which showed the percent of the population which had completed the first grade of education (see figure within brackets).

d Density figures for each study area were estimated from the field records and checked with previous census data.

e BBS (1984 p208).

f BBS (1984, p197).

g Intensity of cultivation = $\frac{\text{Gross cultivated area}}{\text{Net cultivated area}} \times 100$

h Intensity of cash crop cultivation = $\frac{\text{Gross cash-cropped area}}{\text{Net cash-cropped area}} \times 100$

Bangladesh. The present topography of Rampal with its randomly located dobas (ditches), bhities (high land) and other terrace like topographic features has mostly been made by humans over many generations (Bangladesh Geographical Society 1961). Most of the low lying agricultural plots are inundated annually by the Dhaleshwari flood water which regenerates soil fertility.

The region has another advantage, which is its vicinity to a big urban market. Within a short distance from home the Rampalese can exchange their agricultural commodities and surplus labour in a number of potential markets. The place of Rampal is 18 miles downstream from the capital Dhaka; 8 miles away from the industrial city of Narayangonj; and only 3 miles away from Betka, Binatpur, Rikabi Bazar, and Kamalaghat - an emerging commercial, industrial and urban belt along the right bank of the Dhaleshwari-Ichamati rivers (Figure 1.1). The location of Rampal near the Dhaka-Narayangonj connurbation, and with easy communication through the Dhaleshwari, Buriganga, and Sitalakhya rivers, means that it is quite profitable to grow vegetables and fruits instead of paddy and jute.

The role of road transport is also important in Rampal and its surroundings. From Rampal one can reach Rikabi Bazar, Munshigonj, Tongibari and other market places by rickshaw or on foot. Some of the regional roads (e.g. Munshigonj-Tongibari, Rikabi Bazar-Rampal etc.) are partly paved or brick-laid and have

recently been opened for light vehicles such as auto-rickshaws and locally assembled small buses. The internal and external modes of transport are further discussed in Chapter 5.

Chandina

Physiographically, Chandina is also a part of the Meghna floodplain and lies at the eastern margin of that old alluvial plain. The area is located in between the Lalmai hills (average height 70 feet above sea level) and frequently flooded area in Elliotgonj (Figure 1.1). Most of the agricultural lands in Chandina, as opposed to Rampal, are flat. The land seldom goes under flood-water but it is submerged with shallow rain water for short periods especially when heavy showers occur during the middle of the rainy season. The nearest river, the Gumti, lies 10 to 12 miles north-east of Chandina and flows far away from the region.

Road transport is the only way Chandina is linked internally as well as with the outer world. However, the region has a good road network as the Dhaka-Chittagong trunk road (the country's busiest highway) passes through the area. It takes about 4 hours to reach Dhaka or Chittagong from Chandina by bus. Comilla district-town, with a population of 126,000 is situated 12 miles east of the study area. Chandina is connected with Comilla by rickshaws and buses via the Dhaka-Chittagong road. On the same highway there are few other important commercial places which are also

accessible by buses and rickshaws from Chandina (Figure 1.1). Communication with other rural centres is mostly dependent on unpaved roads over which the villagers usually walk or ride bicycles and rickshaws.

Sakhipur

Sakhipur is an area where two large river systems (Padma and Meghna) have met. The physiographic history of this region is very recent, namely less than 100 years. The entire deltaic area between the mainlands of Chandpur and Sariatpur sub-divisions within which Sakhipur lies, has been created by fluvial processes. The whole landmass is composed of recent alluvium of the two rivers and the landscape is criss-crossed by several of their distributory channels. In many parts of this deltaic land, the various processes of land formation are still very active.

Administratively, this vast recent alluvial plain (locally called Char) is divided into eight unions. Sakhipur is the largest and oldest union. It consists of 42 villages (Kandis) of various sizes. The villages are mainly linear as the people built their houses on the natural levee. According to the villagers, the settlement in Sakhipur began in the early part of the present century when people from Dighirpar, Munshigonj, and Tongibari areas migrated to Sakhipur due to river bank erosion and population pressure in Munshigonj sub-division (Figure 1.1). However, data from the survey villages in Sakhipur clearly indicate that the

present population of this region are virtually all (96 percent) locally born.

Until the early 1970s annual flooding was a common phenomenon in this area, but then the regularity and severity of floods suddenly appeared to be less visible. It is generally believed that the Farakka barrage on the river Ganges across the border in India is the main reason for such ecological change. Floods are essential for the rejuvenation of soil fertility in this deltaic plain. Villagers often complained that the absence of a requisite level of flood has caused low productivity on their agricultural land.

These physiographic conditions of the vast char land have not only had an impact on agricultural production; they have also adversely affected the region's transportation and communication systems. Although relatively close to Chandpur and Dhaka-Narayangonj towns, Sakhipur remains one of the most backward regions in Bangladesh. The internal transport system within this char area is underdeveloped compared to the 'mainland' transport system. From November to May, Sakhipur villagers mostly walk whenever they commute or travel to any place. During the rest of the year, some people travel by traditional country boat where rivers are navigable.

The nearest urban centre - Chandpur - is located 10 miles east of Sakhipur and is geographically disconnected by the joint flow of the mighty rivers Padma and Meghna. Dhaka city is regularly connected by

launch via Dularchar - the nearest launch station situated five miles north of Sakhipur. Launch passengers usually traverse this distance by walking on the small foot-tracks through the villages or across the crop fields. It takes approximately six hours to reach Dhaka from Sakhipur, although the place is only 45 miles away from the capital.

3.1.2 Population

Population density

Except for a few city-states like Singapore and Hong Kong, Bangladesh is the most densely populated nation in the world by any standard. As the country largely depends on agriculture, the rural population density distribution mostly follows the agricultural productivity of the land. All the regions examined in this study have striking imbalances in man-land ratio.

Rampal is by far the most crowded rural area in Bangladesh. The average density of population in the four survey villages in Rampal union is 7345 persons per square mile, i.e. 4.5 times higher than the country's mean density (Table 3.1) and more than double Dhaka district's density (3472 persons per square mile). This is an exceptionally high density even by the Bangladesh rural standard. Further congestion arises when the density is considered in terms of cultivated land. It can be seen from Table 3.1 that there are 9187 inhabitants per square mile of arable land in Rampal as against 2719 in Bangladesh and 5141 in Dhaka

district.

The region of Rampal has long been recognized as the country's most densely inhabited area. According to the 1951 census, the spatial and agricultural densities of Rampal union[1] were 4667 and 7668 persons respectively (Bangladesh Geographical Society 1961). In that census year, Bangladesh had 777 persons (one-sixth of Rampal's density) per square mile. The question may arise - why is Rampal so crowded? The extremely high population density can be explained by Rampal's history, high fertility of soil, progressive farming, and locational advantage.

Historical evidence shows that the Vikrampur region (present Munshigonj sub-division) has long been inhabited by human population. Even a century ago (in 1881), 1278 inhabitants lived within a square mile in Vikrampur (Sinha 1965, 40) and that density was one of highest in all Bengal (West Bengal and Bangladesh together). There were prosperous village settlements in Vikrampur when Rampal was the seat of the Sena Kings (c 1095 - 1260 AD, Majumdar 1943, 227-231). It is also believed that Rampal was rich in agriculture during this medieval period. There is no doubt that land productivity is the main reason for high density in Rampal, but it is by no means the only reason. The other reasons are proximity and easy access to a number

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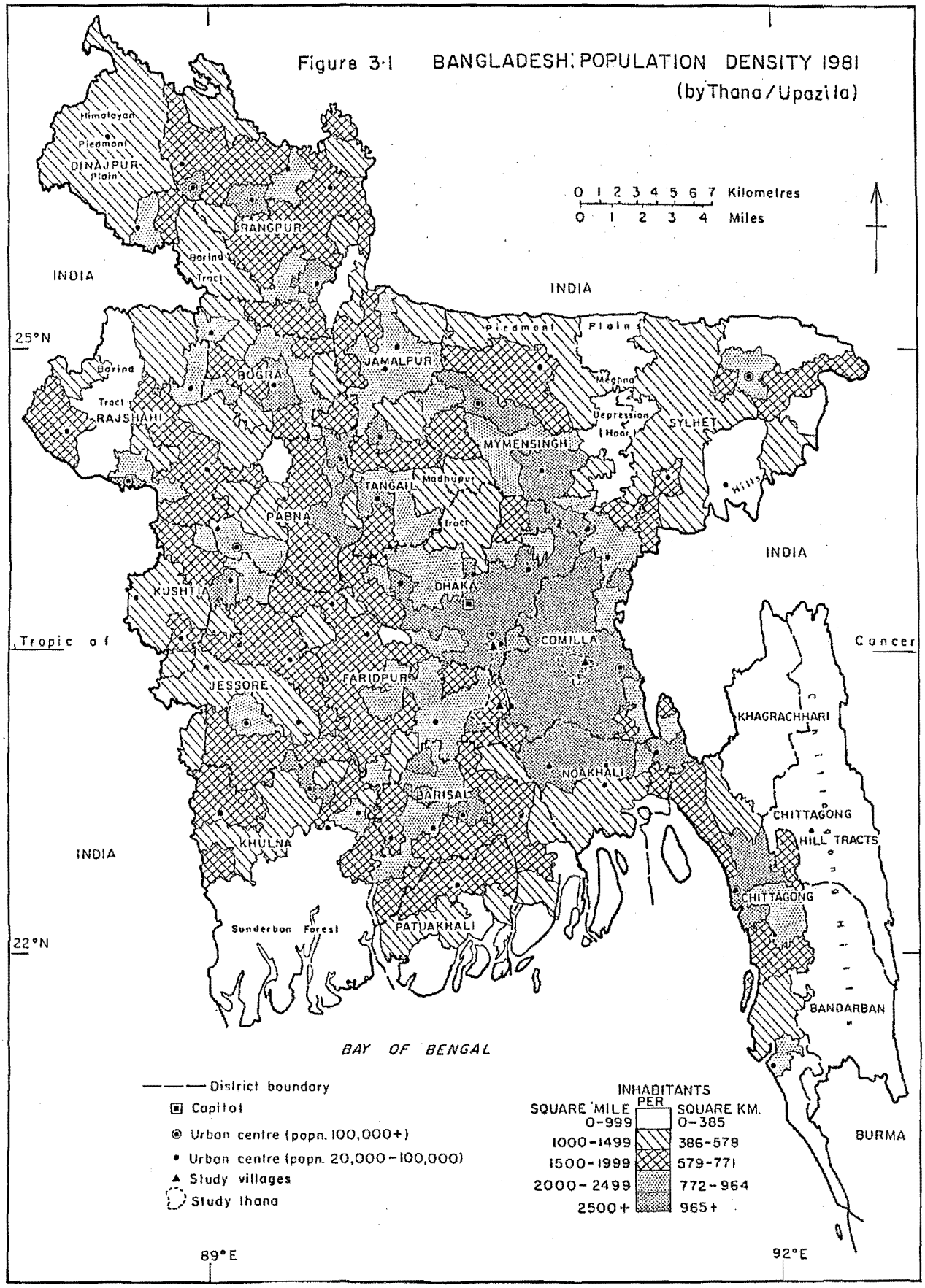
1 Consists of 11 villages four of which are surveyed by the present study.

of urban and semi-urban centres as mentioned in the previous section.

Chandina is also one of the most thickly populated rural areas in the country. This study area lies within Comilla -one of the two most populous districts in Bangladesh (another one is Dhaka district, see Figure 3.1). The spatial and agricultural densities of population in this study location are 2985 and 3678 persons respectively. Comparable statistics for Comilla district as a whole are 2700 and 3591 persons respectively. The high density of people in Chandina, as in most areas of Comilla, is significantly related to the intensive cultivation of IRRI rice (hybrid rice). Although IRRI rice is known almost everywhere in Bangladesh, Comilla is the district where it grows most extensively and intensively.

Compared with Rampal and Chandina, the population density of the Sakhipur region is much lower (Table 3.1). In this area an average density of 1434 persons per square mile is found, which is lower than the national average density (1617 persons) as well as the density of Faridpur district (1793 persons per square mile). Much less pressure of population on land also exists in Sakhipur when the agricutural density is compared with all other regions or districts mentioned so far. It can be argued that low productivity and recent settlement in the Sakhipur deltaic plain are the two primary reasons for a lower population density.



Source: Census 1981

Age structure

The total population enumerated in 1981 in the 14 villages under study was 12391, 6385 males and 6006 females (Table 3.2). Figure 3.2 exhibits the age and sex structure of residents, non-residents, and total population of each survey area as well as all the areas together.[2] The age structure of population in Bangladesh, as in many other less developed countries, is generally depicted by a pyramid-shape with a broad base and a narrow tip. This reflects a situation in which there is a large percentage of children, and a small percentage of elders, in the population.

In the communities surveyed, the population was very young with 49 percent (average for three areas) of children under the age of 15 years and 29 percent of young adults aged 15-34 years (Figure 3.2a). The corresponding proportions of children and young adults in the total rural population of Bangladesh were 47 percent and 29 percent in 1981. The predominance of younger people can also be established by looking at a population's median age. According to the United

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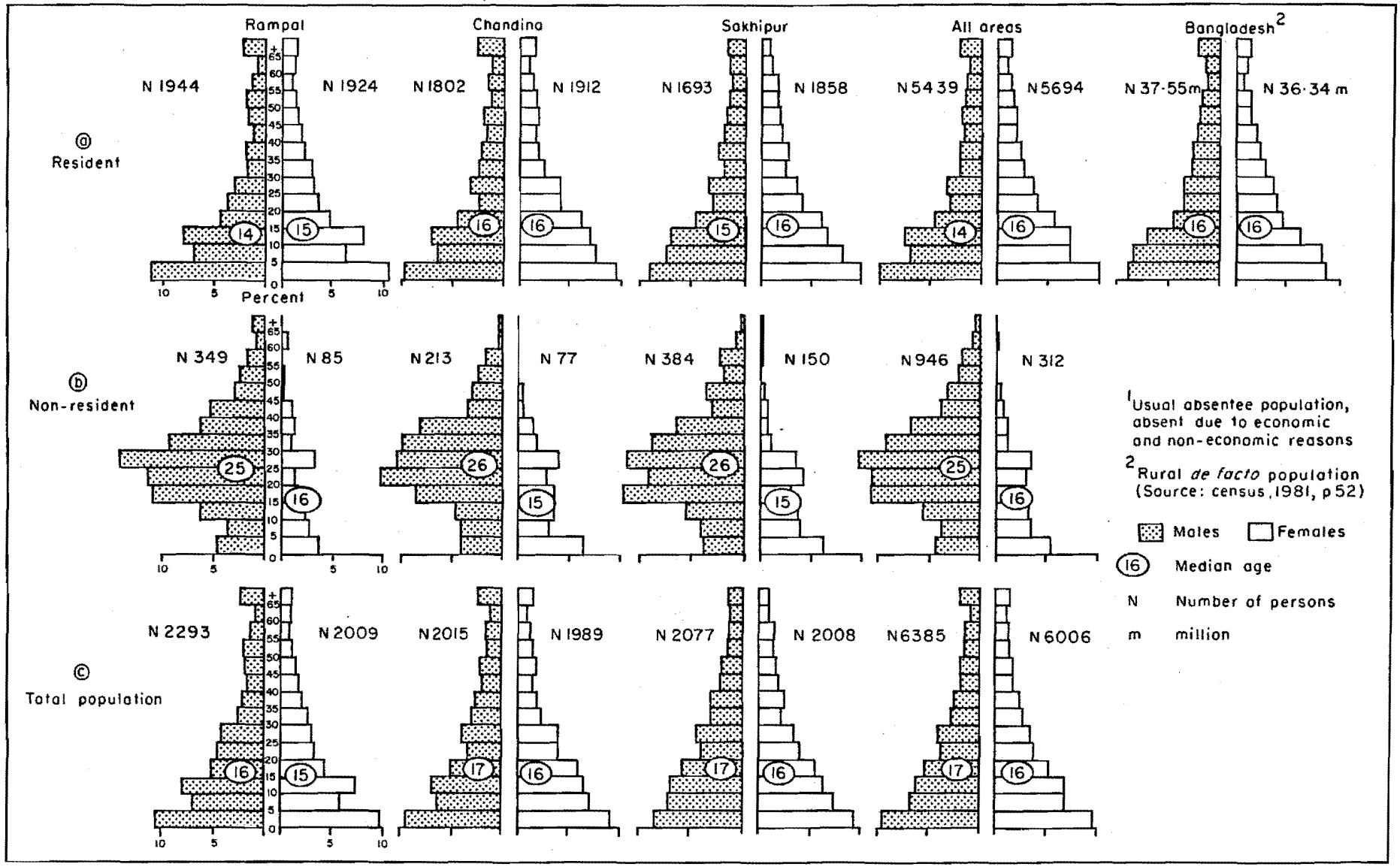
2 An individual who was found to live (sleep) regularly in his/her home village was considered as a resident. In contrast, individuals who regularly lived outside their villages and returned home frequently or infrequently to visit their families were categorised as non-residents. The non-residents were actually the absentee members of village households and at the time of survey, they were found to reside elsewhere for economic or non-economic purposes. Of the 1258 absentees (946 males and 312 females), 1212 persons were migrants and only 46, all males, were commuters.

Table 3.2

Population of Study Villages in Rampal, Chandina, and Sakhipur by sex, 1981

Villages	Male	Female	Total
Ballal Bari	320	293	613
Chaugarar par	323	265	588
Kalinji para	747	666	1413
Daosar	903	785	1688
Total in Rampal	2293	2009	4302
Biswas	303	287	590
Chandiara	582	591	1173
Goumbura	647	631	1278
Madham Tala	483	480	963
Total in Chandina	2015	1989	4004
Malot Kandi	312	307	619
Rari Kandi	541	528	1069
Syail Kandi	258	234	492
Sarder Kandi	258	273	531
Sarker Kandi	332	318	650
Matbor Kandi	376	348	724
Total in Sakhipur	2077	2008	4085
Total all villages	6385	6006	12391

FIGURE 3·2 AGE AND SEX STRUCTURE: RESIDENTS, NON-RESIDENTS[1] AND TOTAL POPULATION 1981



Nations (1981a) if the median age is less than 20 years, one can term the population a "young" one. In 1981, the median age of the Bangladesh rural population was 16 years and that of the study population (resident) was 15 years. Over the census decades, the median age has also declined with the concomitant increase in dependent population. The youthfulness of a nation's population has significant implications both for the rapid increase of numbers and the mobility potential of its residents.

Sex ratio

The sex ratio for the total population recorded in the three communities was 106 males per 100 females, the same as the ratio obtained for Bangladesh by the 1981 census. It should be noted that for several reasons such as underenumeration of females, higher female mortality, and lower life expectancy, an excess of males over females has been a feature of all censuses in Bangladesh. Masculinity is also a common characteristic of the sex composition of the population of other South Asian countries (UN 1981a, 36). Among the three study areas, the sex ratio of 114 in Rampal is quite high (Table 3.1). A detailed explanation of this high masculinity is beyond the scope of the present study but, in brief, it can be stated that the high mobility rate (Table 3.8) and severe population congestion in Rampal, to a great extent, have indirectly caused this sex imbalance.

Interestingly, it was evident that among the young adult males aged 15 to 29 years, 22 percent were married in Rampal, 42 percent in Chandina, and 33 percent in Sakhipur. According to the prevailing system of marriage in Bangladesh, a female after marriage moves to her husband's village. As Rampal has a smaller proportion of young couples, the region is also more likely to have a limited number of female marriage immigrants. Some interesting relationships between population congestion and high levels of mobility on the one hand, and age at marriage, fertility control, and sex ratio on the other, seem to exist and require further research.

In a community where females are unlikely to move out for work or study, the migration of males can reduce considerably the masculinity of the resident population. Table 3.1 illustrates this clearly. Among the resident population there were 96 males per 100 females and the ratio varied from one survey location to another. The villages in Sakhipur recorded a significantly low proportion of resident males, i.e. 91 males per 100 females. This can be explained by the fact that in Sakhipur, migration was more common than commuting and thus this particular area recorded relatively more absentees than the other two areas (Figure 3.2). In Rampal, the sex ratio of the resident population was 101. Although this is lower than the region's overall sex ratio of 114, it is evident that males still dominate numerically in the population. This is due in

part to the smaller proportion of young married couples, mentioned earlier, and also to the predominance of commuting as a form of mobility. The latter was also found to be important in Chandina, and perhaps this factor contributes to an explanation for the similarities in the sex ratios of the total resident populations of this region.

The sex ratio of adult (aged 15 years and above) residents varied greatly with age, and this reflected the considerable selectivity by age and sex of migration (Figure 3.2). Among the total resident population, females from 15-64 years outnumbered males. There were 87 males per 100 females in this age range. From ages 15-34, the deficit of males remained at a high level (83 males per 100 females) which reflected the predominance of male out-migration or absenteeism in that age group. In the rural areas, a sex ratio of 93 in the 15-34 age group was found in the 1981 census. A study based on data from 228 villages of Mathab thana (in Comilla district) indicated that out-migration of males reduced the sex ratio at ages 25-34 years so dramatically that in those villages there were less than 80 males per 100 females in this age group (Ruzicka et al. 1978a). In the advanced age groups (65 years onward) the sex composition of the resident population was absolutely dominated by males due to higher female mortality at older ages, and the return of male migrants to their villages.

A very important characteristic of non-residents or absentees from any rural region of Bangladesh is that they overwhelmingly come from the working age male population. In the study villages, three out of four absentees were males, and four out of five males were aged between 15 to 59 years (Figure 3.2b). The total number of non-resident members in all survey areas was 1258, which included 1212 migrants and 46 male commuters. The overwhelming majority of the absentees (over 85 percent) were in town.

Among the 946 male non-residents, 73 percent had left their villages to work, 10 percent for study and 17 percent were dependents, mostly children. The reasons for absence, among the females, were quite different. Of those 312 females living outside their villages at the time of survey, 90.7 percent were dependents such as wives, children etc. and only 6.7 and 2.6 percent were income earners and students respectively. The above patterns and characteristics of the rural non-resident population should be understood in the context of the total mobility behaviour of village people discussed in section 3.2.

Education

Education is one characteristic where Chandina's population is ahead of Rampal, and in turn Rampal leads the Sakhipur region. However, in all three places a higher literacy level was recorded than the national average (Table 3.1). Information on education was

obtained for all individuals aged 5 years and above. Children aged 5-14 years recorded a higher literacy rate than the adults aged 15 years and above (Table 3.3). Another distinct feature of the literacy levels of children and adults is the difference between males and females. Among the children the gap was very small (on average 10 percent for three areas, with the literacy rate of males being 10 percent higher than that of females). Among the adults, on the other hand, it was very high; in fact males had double the literacy rate of females (Table 3.3). Education has great social and economic significance, and its importance has been increasing with the concomitant rise of population pressure on rural land and employment.

All rural communities are not equally well served or well advanced in terms of literacy levels and this is mainly due to the unequal spatial distribution of education facilities. Chandina and Rampal both have superior facilities to those found in Sakhipur. Students from the two former regions can find primary to higher secondary schools at a convenient distance (within three miles) from their homes. The two areas also have local girls schools. The facilities for education at or nearby the study areas in Sakhipur are relatively poor. There is no girls school and college (higher secondary school) within commuting distance from Sakhipur.

The literacy rate is a crude index of the educational achievement of a country or a region. The

Table 3.3

Literacy Rate[1] of Children aged 5-14 years, Adults aged 15 years and above, and All Population aged 5 years and above by sex and study area

(percentages)

Sex/Age		Rampal	Chandina	Sakhipur	All Areas
Children	Male	63	84	55	67
	Female	63	72	48	61
	Total	63	78	52	64
Adults	Male	55	73	59	62
	Female	29	36	26	30
	Total	43	55	43	47
All	Male	58	77	58	64
	Female	41	48	33	41
	Total	50	62	46	53

1 The proportion (as a percentage) of literate persons in the total population.

effective education level, however, is much below the literacy rate. Tables 3.4 and 3.5 indicate the education levels among the males and females in the study communities, and also in total rural population of Bangladesh (Table 3.5). It is evident from Table 3.5 that most of the literate persons have achieved a very low level of education. Only about one-tenth of the total literates had achieved Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and above. The proportion varied significantly between sexes: for males it was 14.8 and for females 4.0. The effective education levels (i.e. SSC and higher qualifications) of males and females were much lower when the educational attainment of all people, literates and illiterates, was considered together (Table 3.4). It was found that only 9.4 percent of the males (aged 5 years and above) and 1.6 percent of the females had reached that education level.

3.1.3 Agricultural patterns

Agriculture is the predominant source of livelihood in each of the study areas, as is the case in most rural regions in Bangladesh. The major features of this traditional means of living common to the three study areas and also to other rural regions are: non-mechanised family operated farming, traditional methods of ploughing using intensive animal power, labour intensive cultivation, low productivity, small holdings often fragmented into several dispersed plots, a skewed distribution of holdings in terms of ownership, and a

Table 3.4

Educational Attainment of Population aged 5 years and above by Sex and Study Area, 1981

(percentages)

Sex/Place	Illiterate	Primary level	Secondary level	SSC passed	Under-graduate	Graduate and above	Total %	Total N
Rampal								
Male	42.3	36.0	13.5	2.8	3.8	1.6	100	1844
Female	58.8	29.5	10.0	1.1	0.6	-	100	1591
Total	50.0	33.0	11.9	2.0	2.3	0.9	100	3435
Chandina								
Male	23.4	48.8	16.0	4.2	5.6	1.9	100	1641
Female	52.1	39.8	6.5	0.9	0.5	0.2	100	1624
Total	37.7	44.3	11.3	2.5	3.1	1.1	100	3265
Sakhipur								
Male	42.1	36.8	12.6	3.3	3.4	1.6	100	1737
Female	66.7	24.4	7.3	0.9	0.4	0.2	100	1625
Total	54.0	30.8	10.0	2.2	2.0	0.9	100	3362
All areas								
Male	36.3	40.3	14.0	3.4	4.3	1.7	100	5222
Female	59.2	31.3	7.9	1.0	0.5	0.1	100	4840
Total	47.3	35.9	11.1	2.2	2.4	1.0	100	10062

Note: N = Number of persons
SSC = Secondary School Certificate

Table 3.5

Educational Levels by Sex for Study Population and Bangladesh Rural Population, 1981

(percentages)

Sex/Area	Primary level	Secondary level	SSC passed	Under-graduate	Graduate and above	Total %	Total N
Rampal							
Male	62.4	23.4	4.9	6.6	2.7	100	1063
Female	71.5	24.4	2.6	1.4	0.1	100	656
Total	65.8	23.8	4.0	4.6	1.7	100	1719
Chandina							
Male	63.7	20.9	5.5	7.3	2.5	100	1257
Female	83.2	13.5	1.8	1.1	0.4	100	778
Total	71.1	18.1	4.1	5.0	1.7	100	2035
Sakhipur							
Male	63.7	21.8	5.8	6.0	2.8	100	1005
Female	73.4	22.0	2.8	1.3	0.5	100	541
Total	67.1	21.9	4.7	4.3	2.0	100	1546
All areas							
Male	63.3	22.0	5.4	6.7	2.7	100	3325
Female	76.6	19.4	2.3	1.3	0.4	100	1975
Total	68.2	21.0	4.2	4.7	1.8	100	5300
Bangladesh[1]							
Male	63.6	25.0	10.0		1.4	100	11754
Female	80.6	17.0	2.3		0.1	100	6364
Total[2]	69.6	22.2	7.3		1.0	100	18118

1 Source: Census 1981, Table 15, p.90-91
N = Number of persons, for Bangladesh the number should be in thousands.

2 Avoiding census miscalculation.

rising number of landless paupers. The characteristics by which the agricultural pattern varies from one region to another are the region's cropping pattern, intensity of cultivation, and the utilization of modern inputs such as hybrid seed, chemical fertilizer, irrigation etc. In this section, the distinctive features of agriculture in each study region are outlined. In subsequent chapters, the interrelationships between agriculture and mobility behaviour are examined more closely.

Rampal

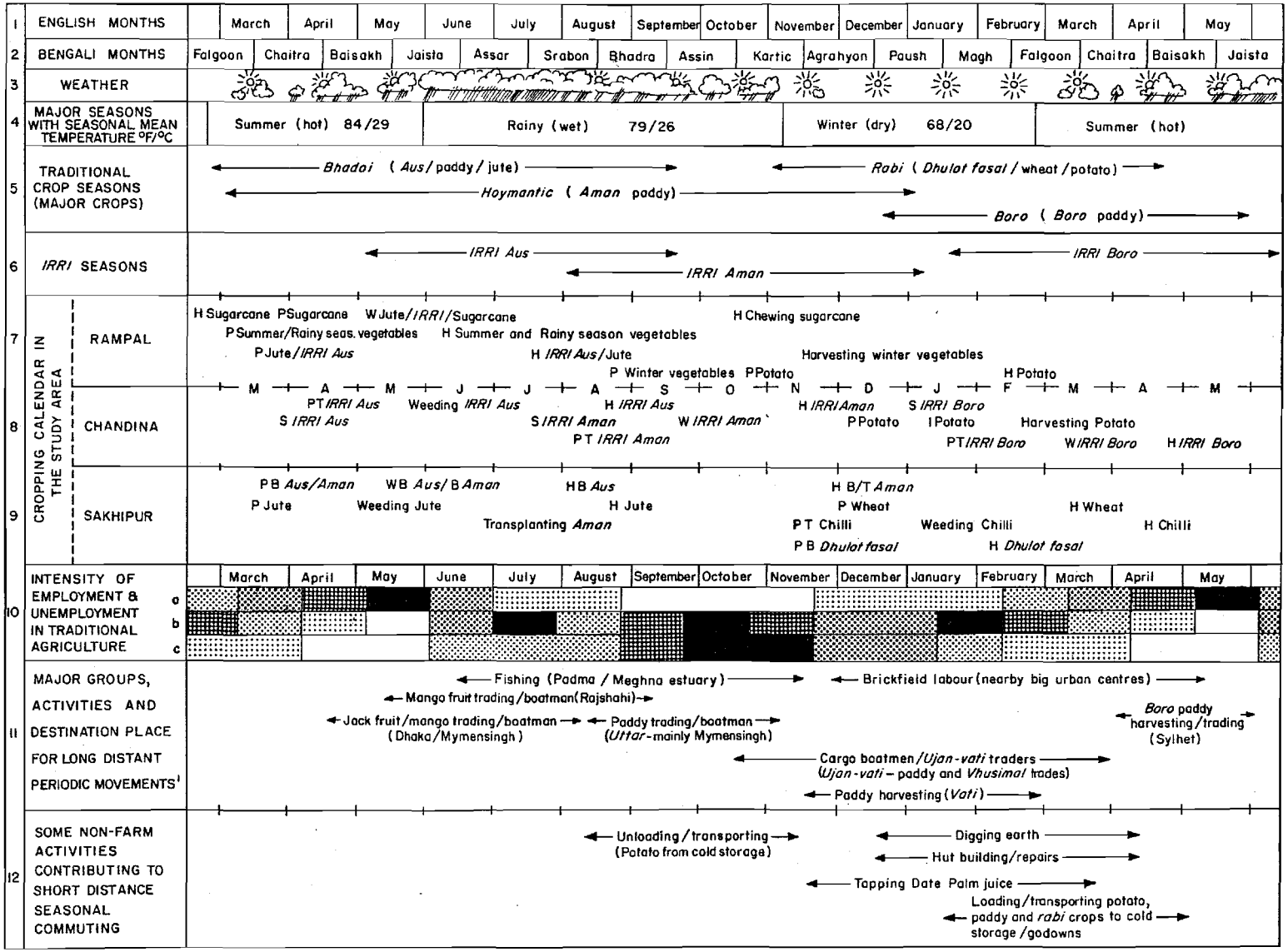
Landuse patterns (Figure 3.3) in Rampal and its surrounding unions are quite different from most parts of the country. Rampal is the centre of the Munshigonj market gardening area, a compact agricultural region covering approximately 20 square miles and growing mainly cash crops such as vegetables, sugarcane, bananas, pan (Betel piper) (Bangladesh Geographical Society 1961). The growing of paddy (unhusked rice) and jute, the two most important and extensively grown crops of Bangladesh, has become less important in Rampal due to competition from more highly valued perishable cash crops. As a result of the high population density, an attempt is made not only to use every inch of land, but also to make the best use of land.

In Rampal, there is no true slack season for garden crops; the greatest harvest is in winter when vegetables are grown intensively over the whole

Munshigonj market gardening area. During this time, the region focuses on activities related to the harvest and trade of winter vegetables (see Chapter 5). Apart from vegetable growing, Rampal has long been famous for the cultivation of banana and pan. However, recently the production and acreage of these two crops have been reduced considerably. Since 1970, many farmers in the Rampal region have switched from banana and pan cultivation to vegetable cropping, as the demand of fresh vegetables increased rapidly with the rapid growth of Dhaka's population since the Independence.

Besides returning higher yields and profits, the cultivation of vegetables has been made more attractive by several other advantages. First, the vegetables grow faster than the monocultural crops (banana, pan, sugar-cane etc.) and the growers can get a quick return on their investment. They can also cultivate their land several times a year. Second, the comparative costs for producing vegetables are lower than the costs of growing perennial or long-term crops. The risks of crop damage are also higher in the latter case. Third, the growers of banana and pan are facing increasing competition with the growers of other regions such as Narsingdi, Bakergonj, and Patuakhali. Finally, variable topography, abundant water and temperature, and plentiful labour contribute to what are excellent conditions for growing a wide range of tropical vegetables in every season of the year.

Figure 3.3 FARM CALENDAR AND PERIODIC MOVEMENTS OF VILLAGE PEOPLE: BANGLADESH, 1981



a. Intensity of farm work
b. Intensity of non-farm work
c. Intensity of unemployment

See Appendix 3 for detailed figures and data source

Highest — Lowest
Intensity of employment and unemployment

B Broadcasting
H Harvesting
I Irrigation
P Preparation of land
S Seedling
T Transplanting
W Weeding

[1] Includes seasonal migration and seasonal commuting

Chandina

Rice has been the principal crop of Chandina for many centuries. Until the late 1960s, all the varieties of rice grown here were traditional types. Since then, the arrival of high-yielding varieties of rice (HYVs[3]) and the associated modern technology such as chemical fertilizer, pesticides, deep tubewell etc. have radically changed the traditional cropping pattern in this region. The changes had two main results: increasing rice yields and the addition of another rice season. By 1981 the traditional varieties of rice had practically disappeared from Chandina (Figure 3.3).

Another crop that had recently disappeared from Chandina was jute - a non-food cash crop. It has been

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3 The study area of Chandina is only 6 miles away from the 'Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development' (BARD), centered at Kotbari near Comilla town. The institute was set up in 1960 with the assistance of the United States. In the late 1960s, BARD introduced IRRI rice (a high-yielding variety of rice invented by and named after the International Rice Research Institute, based at Manila in the Philippines) to its laboratory area in Comilla Kotwali thana, and then this 'miracle rice' rapidly diffused to many areas in Bangladesh. Chandina, being adjacent to Kotwali thana, is regarded as one of the foremost regions of the country where the HYV rice grows intensively in all seasons. In the 1970s the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute added a number of new varieties (for detailed names of all see Johnson 1982, 71) to the HYV family and introduced them to various regions of the country. At present the term IRRI has a wider meaning, especially among the villagers who loosely use this term to indicate all HYV rice or specific HYV rice seasons such as IRRI aus, IRRI boro etc. (Figure 3.3). More recently, the term HYV technology also commonly denotes a package of hybrid seed, chemical fertilizer and irrigation facilities.

replaced by a food cash crop, HYV potato which grows during rabi season (Figure 3.3). Potato cultivation has been known in this region since the early 1960s, but in the 1970s when the HYV technology became more available to this region, its yields and acreage increased sharply. The high density of population in Chandina ensures there is plenty of labour available, an essential requirement for the growing of HYV rice and potato crops. In Chandina, the rabi season was once the least important agricultural cycle, but recently due to the advent of mechanized irrigation systems (irrigation through shallow and deep tube-wells) farmers are now able to grow two very rewarding crops such as IRRI boro and potato.

Sakhipur

The cropping pattern of Sakhipur region has remained very much of the traditional type. The pattern follows the country's three main traditional cropping seasons along with the season's major traditional crops (Figure 3.3). Farmers are cultivating aus rice and jute in the Bhadoi season, aman rice in the Hoymantic season, and wheat, chilli and Dhulot fasal (pulses, oilseeds, and spices) in the Boro season. After jute, chilli is an important cash crop in this region, and recently an increasing number of farmers have been cultivating this crop instead of other boro crops.

Rice is the principal crop in Sakhipur, but the region is still far from self-sufficient in this food. Yet, despite this, Sakhipur has remained one of those regions of Bangladesh where IRRI or HYV rice has not yet diffused. There is a common belief among the farmers in this char land that they may not achieve as great a success in IRRI cultivation as has been achieved by the 'mainland' farmers. They argued that the IRRI ground needs a waterlogging condition for a considerable period of time at the planting stage, but due to porosity of the sub-soil in most char land, water does not stand on the ground after irrigation.

Productivity of land

Most of the agricultural land in Bangladesh could be cropped two or three times a year if provided with irrigation as needed, especially during the dry winter season. In 1981, an index of the average intensity of cropping or cultivation for the country as a whole was 153 (Table 3.1). For Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur the relevant indices were 212, 255 and 181 respectively. With irrigation in Rampal and Chandina, the lands hardly lie fallow at any time during the year. In Rampal, a vegetable farmer, if he wishes, can grow three, four or even a greater number of crops per year on a single piece of land. If we exclude the monocrop areas, i.e. lands under the same crop for one or more years (e.g. sugarcane, banana, and pan gardens), the cropping intensity of Rampal is well over 300. After

the advent of boro season irrigation in Chandina, triple cropping has become a notable feature in this region. The largest percentage of the arable land in the Sakhipur study villages is double-cropped and the most common crop-cycle is to grow robi crops after aus/aman or jute.

From the standpoint of agriculture, the most striking imbalance between Rampal-Chandina and Sakhipur is the productivity of land. The average agricultural production per acre (in taka) in Rampal and Chandina is four times higher than that of Sakhipur (Table 3.1). Besides a few other factors, the introduction of HYV technology in these two areas has played a major role in increasing agricultural production. The low productivity in Sakhipur agriculture can be understood in the light of the region's comparatively poor physical environment and the absence of HYV technology. It is also evident from Table 3.1 that the agricultural land value which is directly related to productivity, is much lower in Sakhipur than in the other survey areas.

In every rural region in Bangladesh, the most striking features of agriculture are the small size of arable land holding per capita, and the unequal distribution of this essential resource. These issues are analysed in Chapter 7.

3.2 MOBILITY AS CIRCULATION

Internal population movement in Bangladesh is

essentially circular, involving temporary relocation from a home base rather than the conventional linear type of migration. Although 'circulation' or non-permanent movement has long been common in Bangladesh, studies of population movement have neglected this phenomenon. Based on empirical data, this section attempts to provide a comprehensive picture of the mobility behaviour of village people in Bangladesh. The discussion will start with a general overview of mobility in the three regions and this is followed by a brief description of each type of movement and a short note on the immobility pattern. The final section examines some major features of mobility behaviour of working women.

3.2.1 Overview of mobility

On the basis of mobility histories, 2325 individual movers were recorded in the 14 villages surveyed in Dhaka, Comilla and Faridpur districts in Bangladesh (Table 3.6). The overwhelming majority were male workers who accounted for 98.56 percent of the total working movers (male and female) and 91.26 percent of all movers (working movers and student movers). Only seven percent (172) were student movers and less than two percent were female movers. Given their numerical insignificance, both student movers and female movers were excluded from further analysis. However, the major characteristics of female working movers and the

Table 3.6

All Movers, Working Movers and Student Movers by Sex and Study Area

(percentages)

Movers	Rampal	Chandina	Sakhipur	All areas
All Movers				
Male	97.89	98.38	98.39	98.19
Female	2.11	1.62	1.61	1.81
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
N	900	680	745	2325
Working Movers				
Male	97.80	99.34	98.83	98.56
Female	2.20	0.66	1.17	1.44
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
N	863	604	686	2153
Student Movers				
Male	100.00	90.79	93.22	93.60
Female	-	9.21	6.78	6.40
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
N	37	76	59	172

reasons for greater immobility among women, are briefly discussed in section 3.4.

Following the field definition (see Chapter 1) all working movers were classified into three broad types: commuters, seasonal migrants (SMs) and non-seasonal or regular circular migrants (CMs). Seasonal migration refers to movement which is controlled by the regional agro-climatic calendar. On the other hand, non-seasonal or regular circular migration includes a wide variety of short-term and long-term movements which were not tied to seasonal employment. Table 3.7 shows the relative importance of the above mobility forms in three study communities. Movers from Rampal and Chandina tended to prefer commuting; while in Sakhipur working movers were more migratory and in particular the rate of seasonal migration was much higher (three times higher than the combined rates of the other two study areas). The variation of mobility patterns can be understood in the light of various structural characteristics which differentiate one region from another.

Accessibility to urban areas

As we have seen in section 3.1.1, Rampal is well located within the hinterland of the biggest urban, industrial and commercial agglomeration of the country. As a result, commuting has become extensive in Rampal. Data from the present study revealed that in Rampal, every eight households had at least five commuters and

Table 3.7

Male Working Movers by Their Mobility Behaviour and Study Area

Mobility behaviour	Rampal %	Rampal N	Chandina %	Chandina N	Sakhipur %	Sakhipur N	All areas %	All areas N
All Commuters	59	495	62	376	29	193	50	1064
Active commuters	51	433	39	241	21	139	38	813
Ex commuters	7	62	22	135	8	54	12	251
All Circular Migrants (CMs)	37	314	32	190	39	267	36	771
Active CMs	29	249	22	132	32	218	28	599
Ex CMs	8	65	10	58	7	49	8	172
All Seasonal Migrants (SMs)	4	35	6	34	32	218	14	287
Active SMs	1	9	3	16	23	153	9	178
Ex SMs	3	26	3	18	9	65	5	109
Total movers (%)	100	844	100	600	100	678	100	2122
Active movers	82	691	65	389	75	510	75	1590
Ex movers	18	153	35	211	25	168	25	532

Note: Active movers are those who were involved in the particular type of movement at the time of survey; ex-movers were those who had practised these forms of movement in the past but were not active at the time of the survey.

four of them commuted to the urban and semi-urban centres. With the shift from traditional cropping to commercial market gardening, farmers found it necessary to make commuting journeys associated with their agriculture.

Chandina, on the other hand, has a good transportation system to important rural commercial centres as well as with the nearest district town (Comilla) located 12 miles east from the study area. In the absence of a big urban 'pull' here, the commuters mostly confined their movements to local and regional trade centres (haats). Given the long distance, rural-urban commuters followed a weekly or bi-weekly pattern of oscillation. One-third of the total commuters were circulating between places within the countryside as well as between village and town. Most of these bi-directional movers were rickshaw pullers (a rickshaw is a three wheeled pedal-driven road vehicle). Apart from the transportation factor, Chandina's agricultural pattern also favoured short-term cyclical movement. Due to intensive farming all round the year, farmers and farm labourers could not move away from their villages for long periods of time.

Poor transportation in the Sakhipur region is responsible for a much reduced volume of commuters, especially the flows of rural to urban commuters. This region, for instance, recorded only 46 rural-urban commuters (24 percent of the total commuters) as against

292 (59 percent) and 165 (44 percent) counted in Rampal and Chandina respectively. Almost all of the 46 were weekly or bi-weekly movers. In Sakhipur, this restricted incidence of commuting might be one reason for a predominance of other forms of movement, particularly seasonal migration (Tables 3.8 and 3.11). In Rampal and Chandina the number of active seasonal migrants (SMs) was smaller than the number of ex SMs, but in Sakhipur the numerical size of active SMs was significantly greater.

These regional variations of movement patterns were associated with the uneven impact of forces such as urbanization, the development of transportation networks, and the improvement of agriculture. In the 1950s and early 1960s seasonal migration had some importance in Rampal and in Chandina. But during the last two decades, the development of transport and agriculture, and the proliferation of nearby urban centres, has changed the movement pattern from a less circulatory to a more circulatory type (i.e. from seasonal circulation to daily commuting). On the other hand, poor transport, traditional agriculture, and severe shortages of periodic employment in and around Sakhipur region, mostly explain persistence of seasonal and circular migration.

Data from the field surveys also revealed that circulation of working movers was predominantly directed towards urban centres. Only 38 percent of the total

movers (2122) circulated solely between rural settlements. A slight majority (53-54 percent) of the seasonal migrants and commuters moved to rural areas. But the flow of circular migration was almost unidirectional.

Out of every ten circular migrants (CMs), nine went to towns and cities. Dhaka (the capital city) alone attracted about half of the urban movers from the study villages. The other three important urban destinations were Narayangonj, Comilla and Chittagong. The driving force behind this drift to the cities and towns was the fact that the scope of intra-rural and inter-rural circulation (for employment) had gradually been narrowing. Some important reasons for this are (i) an acute rural-urban wage gap; (ii) increasing inequality (land/income) among the village households; (iii) improvements in rural to urban transport; (iv) population pressure on scarce resources (land, employment etc.) in every rural area; (v) destruction of some traditional rural occupations or industries; (vi) a large scale seasonal shortage of rural employment; and (vii) the impact of an urban bias in development planning.

Employment

Table 3.8 summarizes the mobility status of all working males who comprised 96 percent of the total working population of the study areas. From the statistics shown in this table, it is quite clear that

Table 3.8

Mobility Status of the Male Working Population[1] by Study Area, 1981

Mobility status	Rampal		Chandina		Sakhipur		All areas	
TOTAL WORKING MALES	1081		913		1047		3041	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Active commuters	433	40.0	241	26.4	139	13.3	813	26.7
Active CMs	249	23.0	132	14.4	218	20.8	599	19.7
Active SMs	9	0.8	16	1.8	153	14.6	178	5.8
All active movers	691	63.9	389	42.6	510	48.7	1590	52.3
Ex commuters	54	5.0	118	12.9	53	5.1	225	7.4
Ex CMs	49	4.5	55	6.0	45	4.3	149	4.9
Ex SMs	24	2.2	17	1.9	63	6.0	104	3.4
All ex movers[2]	127	11.7	190	20.8	161	15.4	478	15.7
All commuters	487	45.0	359	39.3	192	18.3	1038	34.1
All CMs	298	27.5	187	20.5	263	25.1	748	24.6
All SMs	33	3.0	33	3.6	216	20.6	282	9.3
All movers	818	75.7	579	63.4	671	64.1	2068	68.0
Lifetime stayers (never moved)	263	24.3	334	36.6	376	35.9	973	32.0
Currently stayers[3]	390	36.1	524	57.4	537	51.3	1451	47.7

1 Gainfully employed males (excludes people unemployed, dependents, students and a few unpaid child workers).
2 Fifty-four (out of 532) elderly ex movers were excluded from the analysis as they were not engaged in any economic activities.
3 Includes lifetime stayers and 478 ex movers (see note 2) who were working around home.

the practice of movement for securing employment has become a very significant aspect of the livelihood of village families in Bangladesh. Of the total male workforce, the majority (52 percent) were found to earn their living through movement. Two thirds of the men (68 percent) had moved at some stage to get employment. Only about one-third (32 percent) of the workforce were categorised as stayers, people who always worked in the vicinity of their home. However, in terms of current mobility status, 47 percent of the workforce were stayers. Thus the ratio of movers to stayers among the current workers in all study areas was 52:48.

When the household was considered as a unit of analysis (Table 3.9) it was found that 62 percent of all (1941) households had a current mover. The remaining 38 percent were current stayer households comprising 21 percent with men who had never moved and 16 percent with past movers who no longer left the village to work elsewhere. Similar statistics on the mover/stayer status of individuals and households in other Asian countries are lacking and it is thus difficult to assess the extent of mobility and immobility among individuals and households in Bangladesh in wider comparative context.

Apart from analysing the mobility status of all working members, the study also explored the mobility characteristics of all households (Table 3.9). Out of every 10 households four were found to be currently

Table 3.9

Mobility Characteristics[1] of All Households at the Time of Survey in 1981 by Place of Survey

Characteristics	Rampal		Chandina		Sakhipur		All survey areas	
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS (HHs)	684		608		649		1941	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. HHs which never had any mover[2]	97	14.2	163	26.8	158	24.3	418	21.5
2. HHs which had ever-moved member	587	85.8	445	73.2	491	75.7	1523	78.5
3. HHs which had no active/current mover[3]	172	25.1	296	48.7	261	40.2	729	37.6
4. HHs which had any active mover	512	74.9	312	51.3	388	59.8	1212	62.4
5. HHs which had active commuters only	275	40.2	162	26.6	89	13.7	526	27.1
6. HHs which had active CMs only	115	16.8	66	10.8	107	16.5	288	14.8
7. HHs which had active SMs only	2	0.3	9	1.5	104	16.0	115	5.9
8. HHs which had any active mover[4] only	439	64.2	252	41.4	328	50.5	1019	52.5
9. HHs which had ex commuters only	31	4.5	79	13.0	25	3.8	135	7.0
10. HHs which had ex CMs only	32	4.7	38	6.2	27	4.2	97	5.0
11. HHs which had ex SMs only	11	1.6	14	2.3	49	7.6	74	3.8
12. HHs which had any ex mover[5] only	75	11.0	133	21.9	103	15.9	311	16.0
13. HHs which had commuters (active plus ex) only	306	44.7	241	39.6	114	17.6	661	34.0
14. HHs which had CMs (active plus ex) only	147	21.5	104	17.1	134	20.6	385	19.8
15. HHs which had SMs (active plus ex) only	13	1.9	23	3.8	153	23.6	189	9.7
16. HHs which had at least one commuter[6]	400	58.5	305	50.2	163	25.1	868	44.7
17. HHs which had at least one CM[6]	249	36.4	152	25.0	203	31.3	604	31.1
18. HHs which had at least one SM[6]	32	4.7	28	4.6	183	28.2	243	12.5
19. All HHs which had more than one type of mover	92	13.4	44	7.2	62	9.5	198	19.2
20. HHs which had active and ex movers	73	10.7	52	8.5	57	8.8	182	9.4
21. HHs which had any ex mover	148	21.6	189	31.1	160	24.6	497	25.6
22. HHs which had single active mover	452	66.1	282	46.4	354	54.5	1088	56.0
23. HHs which had single ex mover	147	21.5	179	29.4	159	24.5	485	25.0

Note: HHs = Households, CMs = Circular Migrants, SMs = Seasonal Migrants. All percentages are calculated from the total number of households.

1 Movements related to work only.
2 Complete stayer household.
3 Current stayer household.
4 Including HHs which had more than one type of (active) mover only.
5 Including HHs which had more than one type of (ex) mover only.
6 Including HHs which had two or more different types of movers.

stayer households (households which had no current mover) and two of them were complete stayer households (households which never had any mover). The majority of the families had working movers of varying types and numbers as shown in Table 3.9. However, in most of the cases (1088 out of 1212) the current movers' households contained only one active mover per household.

Families possessing two or more active movers (124 cases) followed a complex pattern of movement behaviour. They very often selected two different types of movement, mostly commuting and circular migration, and this strategy enabled them to procure incomes from a variety of destinations over a range of distances. Further investigation showed that families with more than one type of mover or more than one mover were the larger and richer families (Table 7.11). The socio-economic status of movers is examined in Chapter 8.

3.2.2 Commuting

Commuting in search of a livelihood has become a part of the daily routine of a large number of working males living in thousands of villages in Bangadesh. It is a 'way of life' that has been firmly established in rural life and economy. By and large, this particular strategy of movement is greatly influenced by local settings and situations, and as a result there is considerable diversity in the patterns of commuting

in different parts of the country.

The significance of commuting

It is generally believed that commuting is the dominant movement type in most rural areas in Bangladesh. In some places like Rampal and Chandina, commuting is more significant as a movement type than other flows (Table 3.10). However, in other rural communities, such as Sakhipur, it is slightly less significant in terms of numbers of residents commuting rather than participating in circular or seasonal migration. Despite the preponderance of commuting movement in all the areas together, and Rampal-Chandina in particular, it was also found that the relative importance of commuting is gradually declining in every place (Table 3.10). In Rampal, the proportion of commuter workers has decreased from 69 percent to 62 percent since the 1950s. During the same period of time, the proportion commuting in Chandina has been reduced by 10 percent (from 70 percent to 60 percent) and by 7 percent (from 36 percent to 29 percent) in Sakhipur.

During these three decades, the absolute number of commuters has not declined; indeed the volume of commuting has increased quite rapidly. But over the last few decades circular migration has increased more rapidly than other types of movements. In the next few decades this trend is likely to continue and the proportion of total mobility which is commuting will

Table 3.10

Changing Patterns of Mobility Behaviour in the Study Areas Since the 1950s

Mobility behaviour and study area	Period [1] 1950-59	1960-69	1970-79	Total Movers [2]
Commuting				
Rampal (495)	69 (42)	68(133)	62(269)	59 (495)
Chandina (376)	70 (46)	64 (94)	60(142)	63 (376)
Sakhipur (193)	36 (20)	25 (31)	29(105)	28 (193)
All areas (1064)	59(108)	55(258)	50(516)	50(1064)
Circular Migration				
Rampal (314)	23 (14)	27 (54)	36(158)	37 (314)
Chandina (190)	26 (17)	27 (39)	35 (83)	32 (190)
Sakhipur (267)	22 (12)	40 (49)	41(147)	39 (267)
All areas (771)	24 (43)	31(142)	38(388)	36 (771)
Seasonal Migration				
Rampal (35)	8 (5)	5 (10)	2 (10)	4 (35)
Chandina (34)	5 (3)	9 (13)	4 (10)	6 (34)
Sakhipur (218)	42 (23)	34 (42)	30(108)	32 (218)
All areas (187)	17 (31)	14 (65)	12(128)	14 (287)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate numbers of specific movers.

1 Data presented in this table were calculated from the mover's (active and ex) year of starting their most recent period of movement behaviour.

2 Including those who made their last movements before 1950 or after 1979.

fall further, especially in Rampal and Chandina. However, at the same time, the volume of commuting will also continue to rise because of the tremendous population pressure on local resources and the impact of modernization particularly on agriculture and transportation.

The rationale for commuting

Unlike seasonal migrants, commuters are represented by a wide range of occupation groups coming from various ages, education levels, landholdings, and economic classes (see Chapters 6, 7, and 8). In every study area, their occupation patterns are heavily influenced by two major factors, namely the agricultural structure of the region and the nearness of the area to towns and other centres of non-agricultural activities such as rural markets and thana headquarters. Commuting is a very appropriate type of movement, especially for areas like Rampal and Chandina where agriculture stays intensive in most parts of the year, and the majority of people cannot provide their daily livelihood from the land due to high man-land ratios and skewed distributions of holdings. Since farming is intensive, the villagers cannot leave their farms for long periods and they mostly seek informal off-farm occupations close to their village.

The introduction of intensive cropping through HYV technology or the green revolution in traditionally backward agricultural regions in Bangladesh, or other

parts of South and Southeast Asia, has been found to have significant positive effects on rural employment (Muqtada 1975; Jones 1978). But empirical studies have seldom explained precisely the impact of that new technology on the mobility behaviour of villagers. The pattern found in Rampal and Chandina may not be true for other countries where man-land ratios and the distribution of arable land are significantly better than those in the two Bangladeshi rural regions.

Turning to Rampal and Chandina again, it can also be noted that commuting not only complements the livelihood of poor farmers and wage labourers, it also attracts a considerable number of surplus farmers (or farm owners) who earn extra income through commuting to nearby towns or big rural markets where very often they have an established business. Some of them are dealing with the regions' profitable crops (e.g. potatoes, paddy, Kachamal etc.) or retailing modern fertilizers. They have been attracted to commuting - a way of living which provides them with an easy life and impressive earnings from an improved cropping and commuting occupation. As a matter of fact, with the development of agriculture and transportation, the spread of urban centres, and an increase in population pressure on cultivation, a growing number of researchers have now started to view commuting as an alternative to migration in many Third World countries, especially in the compact agrarian regions. This issue is discussed further in

Chapter 6.

3.2.3 Circular migration

Circular migration which mainly involves rural-urban migrants, appears to be a long-lasting mobility type in the rural areas in Bangladesh. Unlike commuting and seasonal migration, this particular type of movement is less influenced by agricultural activities and transport conditions. As a result, the regional pattern of circular migration does not exhibit great differences (Table 3.10). Although the migrants are selected from a wider socio-economic spectrum, there was a clear indication in the survey data that certain groups of people, such as educated persons, salary earners, and better-off villagers, had a high propensity to circular migration. These aspects, along with the other characteristics of the migrants and their families, are examined in subsequent chapters.

Significance and growth

It can be argued that circular migration is the dominant migratory flow in almost all rural communities in Bangladesh. Empirical evidence (Table 3.7) from the present study showed that about three-quarters (73 percent) of the total 1058 migrants (CMs plus SMs) were circular migrants. Among the active migrants the proportion of CMs was even higher - 77 percent (599 out of 777). In Rampal and Chandina, circular migration was far more important than seasonal migration. The

former place recorded 314 CMs accounting for 90 percent of the total 349 migrants, and the latter area registered 190 CMs who represented 85 percent of the total 224 migrants. Sakhipur, the third study location, generated 267 CMs contributing 55 percent of the total migrants from this region.

Another notable feature of circular migration evident in all study villages was its uninterrupted growth, which is obviously related to the steady increase in urban population through rural-urban migration. In the 1950s circular migration in the study population accounted for 24 percent of all working movements; in the 1960s the proportion rose to 31 percent and eventually in the 1970s it further increased to 38 percent (Table 3.10). The growth of this mobility type is also evident in other parts of Asia and the Third World (Hugo 1978a, Goldstein 1978, Bedford 1973, Chapman and Prothero 1985, Skeldon 1984).

There are many reasons for this increasing circular migration from rural communities; these are explained in great detail in Chapter 6. Given the low level of urbanization, the absolute size and density of rural population, and the growing dependency of rural families on incomes from both rural and urban areas, it can be predicted with some confidence that the system of circular migration is likely to be further reinforced in rural communities in Bangladesh.

3.2.4 Seasonal migration

As a strategy for livelihood, seasonal migration is especially favoured by poor villagers from relatively poor agricultural regions. The migrants tend to be mainly unskilled and illiterate or nominally educated labourers who come from the lower income families with no cultivable land or very little land. The timing of moves is closely bound up with the traditional agricultural system. In the study areas in 1981, seasonal migration was most common among the agricultural labourers and small peasants.

Seasonal occupations

Usually the migrants leave their village residence during the slack season and move to other places (rural or urban) where various types of periodic work are available at a range of distances from the migrant's home. This has been illustrated quite clearly in Figure 3.3. Sakhipur migrants work in various activities such as fishing[4] (34 percent or 52 out of 153) in the Padma-Meghna estuary; working at the brickfields[5] (32 percent) in nearby urban centres; and harvesting paddy (16 percent) in ujan-vati areas (mainly Sylhet and Barisal districts). Other notable seasonal

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4 Most of these seasonal fishermen were in fact labourers who came to fish on contract. So, in brief, the bulk of the catch was set apart for those who provided the fishing boat, net, and initial cash often necessary for payment in advance to the contract labourers.

5 Various types of manual work related to making, laying, transporting and baking of bricks.

occupations undertaken by migrants from the Sakhipur region were casual contract-type businesses (dealing mostly with the sale of seasonal crops - dhulot fasal), driving rickshaws, and construction-work in towns.

In Rampal, there were only nine (5 percent of 178) active seasonal migrants - seven Kachmal traders, and two casual labourers. Eight of them moved to Dhaka-Narayangonj urban centre. Seasonal migrants originating from Chandina were also mostly (14 out of 16) directed to towns where the migrants obtained various types of temporary jobs ranging from contract-type business, to a salaried job to casual labour.

Declining significance

In many parts of the developing world, the relative importance of seasonal migration among the rural workforce has been declining gradually. This has been substantiated in a number of recent studies (Maude 1981; Garnier 1978, 262; Van Schendel 1981, 143). A similar finding is evident in our study villages. It appeared that the proportion of all movers who were seasonal migrants had declined from 17 percent in the 1950s to 14 percent in the 1960s, and to 12 percent in the 1970s. The rate of decline, as shown in Table 3.10, varied markedly, especially between Rampal-Chandina and Sakhipur study areas. Seasonal migration in Rampal and Chandina gradually became insignificant as a mobility type; while in the Sakhipur region, this form of movement was still found to be very important

although its relative importance had decreased substantially from 42 percent in the 1950s to 30 percent in the 1970s.

Further analysis of data relating to the decline of seasonal migration indicated that among the ex movers, the proportion of seasonal migrants was 20 percent (109 out of 532) but among the active movers the rate had dropped to 11 percent (178 out of 1590). In Rampal the proportion had decreased from 17 percent to only one percent (26 out of 153 and 9 out of 691), in Chandina from 9 to 4 percent (18 out of 211 and 16 out of 389), and in the Sakhipur region the rate had changed from 37 percent to 30 percent (65 out of 168, and 153 out of 510).

The pattern of seasonal circulation and its space-time variations depends upon several factors, the most important of which is the agricultural system. In recent years studies in South and Southeast Asian countries have argued that the incidence of seasonal migration has declined where traditional farming methods were substantially altered through the introduction of modern seed-fertilizer-irrigation technology or 'Green Revolution' (Van Schendel 1981, 143; Oberai and Singh 1982). Few will deny that the green revolution increased labour demand and reduced the extent of the slack season by adopting intensive cropping. As a result one might expect a decreasing trend of seasonal movement among the labourers and small peasants within

the green revolution regions. Van Schendel (1981, 143), for instance, found that seasonal migration from five villages of Bogra (northern district of Bangladesh) came to an abrupt halt when intensive cultivation of hybrid potato was introduced in rabi season.[6] Rampal and Chandina, two of the most successful green revolution areas in Bangladesh, are areas where seasonal migration is of limited significance.

Apart from agricultural improvement in the migrants' native villages, another factor has reduced the demand for seasonal labour in some regions. Rapid population growth in rice-surplus districts such as Sylhet and Barisal, formerly destinations for short-term migrants during the paddy harvesting season, has increased substantially the size of the local labour force. In consequence, a large number of ujan-vati paddy harvesters have had to re-direct their labour migration to urban locations where they can find seasonal work making bricks, in construction, and selling seasonal agricultural products.

The intensity of seasonal migration from rural settlements was found to decrease with gradual development of agriculture and transportation links with towns and rural markets. It also appeared that the

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6 In Bangladesh, under traditional agriculture methods, farm workers often remain un-underemployed during rabi season. So during this period of the agricultural cycle, seasonal migrants either move to towns or to boro paddy growing areas (see Figure 3.3).

direction of movement was slowly shifting from rural destinations to urban centres. Further investigation is needed to explain fully the nature of this shift in mobility behaviour.

3.3 RELOCATION AND IMMOBILITY

The main concern of this section is to analyse the major features of permanent migration and immobility on the basis of data collected from the survey villages. In the case of the former, inquiry was focused on those movements which were mostly related to the economic livelihood of the migrants and their families. In order to minimise the temporal and conceptual overlaps in assessing 'permanent' and 'nonpermanent' movements, the study defines permanent relocation as full commitment to life in the place of destination.

3.3.1 Permanent relocation

According to the above definition 305 cases of permanent relocation since 1947 were recorded in the 14 villages.[7] It was found that unlike temporary or cyclical forms of movement, permanent relocations mostly involved the displacement of the whole family or household (87 percent cases) rather than the departure or separation of individuals from the village family (Table 3.11). When the whole family moved to the

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7 These 305 migration cases were excluded from the village household lists, because the migrants had left their native village permanently.

destination, the volume of contacts with the native place reduced sharply. Of the 305 cases of permanent migration, 188 (62 percent) had no social contacts with relatives at native villages; 114 (37 percent) had visited relatives occasionally and only three were found to remit money to village relatives. A sample of 120 cases (out of 305) further revealed that a quarter (31 out of 120) of the permanent migrants owned some arable land in their village of origin (mostly cultivated by blood relatives) and only seven out of 120 also owned houses (used by the relatives) in their native villages.

Destinations

There were some important differences in the destinations of people who had left their villages permanently and those whose movement behaviour was circular from a village base. Apart from migrations that took place within the country (83 percent or 251 out of 305 cases), a significant percentage (17 percent, 54 out of 305) of the total flows ended at other countries (mostly India and Pakistan) across the international boundaries. These overseas migrants left their native villages for two main reasons - economic hardship and political division of the Indian subcontinent. The latter cause was entirely related to the displacement of 22 Hindu families and a Hindu male from Goumbura and Madham Tala villages (in Chandina) to mainly neighbouring states of Hindustan (India) such as Assam and Tripura. All these emigrations took place

during the 1950s and 1960s. All but one of the Muslim emigrants (29 families and two single males) came from Sakhipur villages and 14 of them settled in Bombay, 10 in Karachi, 4 in Assam and the remaining 3 in the Middle East. As shown in Table 3.11, they were the poverty-stricken emigrants.

According to the villagers' opinion, those who emigrated to Karachi and Bombay cities were very poor and the majority of them had left their villages during the 1970s when national and international economic crises severely affected the livelihood of most Bangladeshis. For a further insight especially into these two very long-distant emigration channels, we asked the villagers why those poor families selected Bombay and Karachi cities instead of neighbouring big urban centres such as Dhaka and Calcutta. The reason was that in and around Sakhipur, these two permanent migration routes were known to many villagers through occasional visits of the previous emigrants.

Most of the permanent departures of families or individuals from all the study areas were to destinations within Bangladesh. Of the total 305 migrations, 133 (44 percent) were to towns and 118 (39 percent) were to rural settlements. The major rural destinations (74 out of 118) were in neighbouring regions. It was quite evident that the reasons for permanent relocation varied markedly with the nature of the destination (Table

Table 3.11

Some Features of Permanent Migration by Destination

Features	Destination						Total	
	Rural		Urban		Overseas			
Total cases[1] of permanent migration	118		133		54		305	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Study Area								
Rampal	39	33	74	56	-		113	37
Chandina	46	39	17	13	24	44	87	29
Sakhipur	33	18	42	32	30	56	105	34
Religious Composition								
Muslims	115	97	133	100	31	57	279	91
Hindus	3	3	-	-	23	43	26	9
Mode of Migration								
Migrated single	15	13	23	17	3	6	41	13
Migrated with whole family	103	87	110	83	51	94	264	87
Main occupation or working status of the principal migrant before leaving the village permanently								
Grehasti	27	23	11	8	21	39	59	19
Trade and business	18	15	22	17	3	6	43	14
Agricultural labour	32	27	34	26	18	33	84	28
Non agricultural labour	16	14	2	1	1	2	19	6
Factory work	3	3	2	1	-		5	2
Services	8	7	30	23	2	4	40	13
Artisans	1	1	2	1	7	13	10	3
Students	3	3	21	16	2	4	26	9
All others[2]	10	8	9	7	-		19	6
Mobility behaviour of the principal migrant before leaving the village permanently								
Commuter	49	42	32	24	25	46	106	35
Rural to rural (RR)	39	33	19	14	19	35	77	25
Rural to urban (RU)	4	3	10	8	5	9	19	6
Both RR and RU	6	5	3	2	1	2	10	3
Circular migrant[3]	25	21	74	56	15	28	114	37
Rural to rural	7	6	5	4	6	11	18	6
Rural to urban	18	15	66	50	8	15	92	30
Both RR and RU	-		3	2	1	2	4	1
Non movers i.e.stayer	43	36	27	20	13	24	83	27
Do not know	1	1	-		1	2	2	1

contd.

Features	Destination						Total	
	Rural		Urban		Overseas			
Principal cause of permanent migration								
Economic hardship	21	18	47	35	24	44	92	30
Shortage of land	56	47	19	14	-		75	25
Lack of employment	3	3	32	24	2	4	37	12
Marriage of ghor-jamai[4]	23	19	3	2	3	6	29	9
Political reason	-		-	-	23	43	23	8
To avoid rural-urban circulation	-		12	9	-		12	4
Loss of parents and close relatives	5	4	5	4	-		10	3
All other reasons	10	8	15	11	2	4	27	9
Household economic condition before leaving the village permanently								
Rich	-		2	1	2	4	4	1
Middle-income	30	25	48	36	16	30	94	31
Poor	88	75	83	62	36	67	207	68
Household tenural status before leaving the village permanently								
Owner farmer	7	14	11	21	7	37	25	21
Owner cum tenant	15	31	5	10	2	11	22	18
Tenant only	4	8	6	12	1	5	11	9
Landless labour	13	27	10	19	3	16	26	22
Land lessor	-		4	8	2	11	6	5
Owner cum lessor	3	6	4	8	3	16	10	8
Non labour landless	5	10	7	13	-		12	10
Other types	2	4	5	10	1	5	8	7
Total in sample	49		52		19		120	

1 The study recorded 305 cases of permanent migration of which 264 involved family relocations and 41 the movement of individuals (for definition and further details see text).
2 Including unemployed people and unknown cases.
3 Mostly non-seasonal circular migration.
4 A particular type of marriage in which the married man moves to the homestead of his wife and resides there permanently (Jansen 1983, 83). For more details see text.

3.11).

Reasons for relocation

Permanent migration to towns was chiefly caused by economic hardship, lack of employment and shortage of land (mostly arable land) whereas movement to rural areas was mostly due to the severe shortage of both arable and homestead land. Increased population pressure forced many small peasant and labourer families to migrate to relatively less crowded rural regions. Further analysis of reasons by place of origin indicated that the rate of permanent relocation due to shortage of land was positively associated with population density. This has been substantiated by most census reports which have shown that rural to rural lifetime migration was closely related to the density (population) gradient as mentioned in Chapter 2.

Data from each survey location revealed that the "land-hungry" permanent migrant families were more likely to move to neighbouring regions because of the fact that short-distance displacement enabled them to maintain vitally important social contacts (such as children's marriages, parental visits, mutual help to relatives etc.) with native relatives and society. Another important cause of rural to rural permanent migration, which was in fact rooted to land-shortage, was the marriage system of those males who were living

in their father-in-law's home as ghor-jamai [8] (resident son-in-law). Almost one-fifth (23 out of 118) of the rural migrations were linked with ghor-jamai marriage. All of these 23 ghor-jamais came from poor, land-hungry families and they married into families with a considerable amount of land.

Changes in mobility status

The movement patterns were further examined in the context of a transition from circular (non-linear) to permanent (linear) forms of mobility. It was found that only 27 percent of those who had left permanently had changed their mobility status directly from stayer to permanent relocation (83 out of 305, Table 3.11).

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8 Under the prevailing system of marriage in Bangladesh, a woman at the time of marriage moves to her husband's residence to live. But in some marriages when the man permanently moves to the homestead of his wife, he used to be called ghor-jamai (resident son-in-law) - a term which downgrades the status of the husband in the society as well as in his father-in-law's house (Jansen 1983, 83). Generally the ghor-jamais come from a poor economic background, very often from landless and near landless families, and they marry into families with a relatively higher socio-economic status especially with the families which have daughters but no sons. So in this type of marriage system the sonless father-in-law, with the assistance of his young ghor-jamai can manage his agricultural activities or any other family business. What is more important to mention here is that in a society where elderly parents depend on their sons (for old age security), parents without sons rely on their ghor-jamai (if they have any). On the other hand, to the poor landless ghor-jamai, this marriage system provides an easy and quick way to escape from the economic constraints of his life, as he knows one day he and his wife will be the owner of his father-in-law's property. In short, ghor-jamai marriage can be explained as an adaptation to the socio-economic circumstances of the people involved in the marriage (Jansen 1983, 83-84).

The large majority of the relocation cases (72 percent of 305), had become permanent migrants after participating in a form of non-linear movement such as commuting or circular migration. These results suggest that permanent relocation from villages in Bangladesh follows from some experience with forms of circular mobility.

Commonly, the migrant starts with a circulatory pattern of movement from his village of residence to one or more destination places and eventually, he settles in the best available destination place. Parallel findings can be found in other agrarian regions in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa where the process of internal migration, especially the rural-urban stream, is predominantly non-linear (Nelson 1976) as in Bangladesh.

Permanent migration for economic reasons is not a new phenomenon in Bangladesh, but the scale, direction and character of movement has definitely altered in response to political changes in the Indian sub-continent (Chapter 2), increasing population pressure on land, and uneven regional development through urbanization, transportation and agricultural improvement. But unfortunately, due to the lack of appropriate data, the changing nature of permanent relocation over time and space cannot be shown statistically.

Prospects for permanent relocation

On the basis of the field data and fragmentary

evidence from census data, some conclusions can be reached on permanent relocation. First, both long-distance and short-distance relocation from rural communities are becoming less common. The former may be decreasing in significance at a faster rate than the latter. An analysis of migration data based on 1951, 1961 and 1974 censuses, indicates that after 1961 the lifetime migration rate has stabilised [9] (Elahi 1980). The most obvious reason for such stabilisation is that the permanent displacements within rural regions, as opposed to towns, are heavily dependent on the availability of land (homestead and arable) at the place of destination. Due to the rapid increase of population, land has become a very scarce resource in high demand in every village in Bangladesh.

Permanent migration to urban centres appears to be assuming a more important role. It is generally believed that the Third World cities will be the final place of living for the majority of rural migrants. Nelson (1976, 733) indicates that those parts of the Third World where temporary migration to town is still extensive will experience a shift toward more permanent relocation in the future. But there is little doubt that in the case of Bangladesh, the above change or transformation will remain fairly slow for a long time in the future (Chapter 9).

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9 Persons enumerated in a place (usually district) different from the "place of birth".

The very low mobility of rich families (Table 3.11) tends to suggest that permanent departure from the rural areas is deeply associated with socio-economic distress. This pattern is likely to continue, until there are some radical changes in village life. Ongoing rural development projects, such as rural electrification may bring some urban amenities and new jobs to villages and thereby may help to keep some potential migrants, especially the educated youths, in rural areas.

Finally, the scope and opportunities for permanent migration to other countries, especially to the neighbouring states of India, are now much reduced due to recent ethnic violence and strong anti-immigrant feelings among the natives in Assam and Tripura states. However, the current emigration of Bangladeshi workers to the Middle East countries and the adjustment problems on return of those workers to home may generate some potential permanent migrations from countryside to town. A World Bank paper (1981) indicates that three-quarters (78 percent) of the Middle East emigrants have come from rural areas and a significant proportion of those migrants are investing their overseas earnings in urban land and housing in Bangladesh. By and large, however, the options for permanent migration within and across the territory of Bangladesh have been narrowing. This has enhanced the role of nonpermanent reciprocal movement in rural life.

3.3.2 Immobility

So far, different types of movement, recorded in the three rural regions of Bangladesh, have been outlined and it remains to illustrate some characteristics of immobility. In a community where both movers and stayers are very common, a comprehensive perspective on mobility behaviour cannot be obtained through surveys of only those people who have moved. It is widely believed that the full range of answers related to the question "why do people move?" is partly reliant on the understanding of "why do people not move?" (De Jong and Gardner 1981). The existing body of migration literature on Bangladesh provides little insight into the various characteristics of the stayers and their families. This section gives a brief account of the nature of immobility in the study communities.

Household characteristics

Analysing the mobility behaviour of all male workers, it was found that in two-fifths of the village households (763 out of 1941) there were 973 males who had never worked for any period in a place which was two miles or more away from their residence. According to definitions adopted for this study (see Chapter 1) these workers were classed as stayers or non-movers.[10] They

10 Although the stayers never moved for employment, the great majority of them (85 percent of the 120 in the sample), however, have visited neighbouring towns for various reasons (Table 3.12) other than work. These visits were not counted as 'migration' in this study as they were not related to activities associated with employment.

accounted for almost one-third (32 percent) of the total male workers and two-thirds of the current stayer workers (Table 3.8). Half of the stayer workforce (481 out of 973) came from those rural households which had never had any people absent for work-related reasons (Table 3.9). These complete stayer households were found to be considerably different in terms of family size, composition, land holding, income and other socio-economic characteristics from the other village-households such as households which had commuters or migrants.

Working stayers originated mainly from families characterized by small size (Table 7.1), simple structure (Table 7.3), and low quantity and quality of man-power (Table 7.12). As a result, these households were found to earn an income lower than the earnings of families with circular migrants or commuters (Chapter 7). In the field, it was quite noticeable that the son who came from the single-son family was more likely to remain as a stayer than as a commuter, or to be a commuter rather than a circular migrant. Of the 120 stayers in the sample, a quarter had no brothers. The corresponding proportions found among the samples of commuters (120) and current CMs (93) were 18 percent and only 6 percent respectively.

With reference to agricultural landownership patterns, it was found that a non-mover's family on average owned a greater amount of land than a commuter's

household, but less land than a circular migrant's family. When the pattern of operated land and own cultivated land was explored further, it was found that although a stayer family owned a small amount of land, it operated or cultivated larger areas than any mover's family. This gives an indication as to why and how some villagers were able to obtain a living and to stay in their native villages.

Individual characteristics

Besides family background, the individual or personal characteristics of non-movers such as age, education, occupation etc. were also found to be considerably different from the attributes of movers. A common feature was that a large proportion of both movers and non-movers belonged to the young adult ages such as 15 to 29 years. The feature was mainly caused by, and related to, the pyramidal structure of population. Among the middle age males (30 - 54 years) the proportion of non-movers was substantially lower in comparison with the proportions of movers, especially the commuters. Among those persons aged 55 and over, the pattern was opposite - there was a greater proportion of elderly stayers than of movers.

The reason for the low proportion of non-movers in the middle age groups can be explained by the fact that usually males at this particular stage of their lives need to earn more money to support their family which consists of spouse, children and very often

Table 3.12

Some Opinions and Attitudes of Stayers[1] by Study Area

Opinions and attitudes	Rampal N	Rampal %	Chandina N	Chandina %	Sakhipur N	Sakhipur %	All areas N	All areas %
Total in sample	40		40		40		120	
Frequency of visiting town								
Never visited	6	15.0	3	7.5	9	22.5	18	15.0
Seldom visited	8	20.0	19	47.5	17	42.5	44	36.7
Occasionally visited	26	65.0	18	45.0	14	35.0	58	48.3
Total	40	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0	120	100.0
Purpose(s) of visiting								
Pleasure and recreation trip	8	23.5	12	32.4	3	9.7	23	22.5
Occasional shopping/ business tour	15	44.1	3	8.1	9	29.0	27	26.5
Multiple purposes	3	8.8	11	29.7	14	45.2	28	27.4
Health care	3	8.8	3	8.1	1	3.2	7	6.9
Judicial cause	-		5	13.5	-		5	4.9
All other purposes	5	14.7	3	8.1	4	12.9	12	11.8
Total	34	100.0	37	100.0	31	100.0	102	100.0
Presence of relatives in visiting towns								
Have no relatives	17	50.0	28	75.7	22	71.0	67	65.7
Have a few	17	50.0	9	24.3	9	29.0	35	34.3
Total	34	100.0	37	100.0	31	100.0	102	100.0
Reasons for living permanently in the village								
No alternative place to live	32	80.0	13	32.5	28	70.0	73	60.8
Prefer to live at parental place	3	7.5	14	35.0	3	7.5	20	16.7
Looking after grehasti	5	12.5	13	32.5	9	22.5	27	22.5
Total	40	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0	120	100.0
Reasons for not moving being economically unhappy/poor[2]								
Incompetent to off-farm work	10	37.0	6	40.0	4	26.7	20	35.1
Because of hand to mouth living	6	22.2	3	20.0	6	40.0	15	26.3
If move, grehasti will be affected	3	11.1	5	33.3	-		8	14.0

contd.

Opinions and attitudes	Rampal N	Rampal %	Chandina N	Chandina %	Sakhipur N	Sakhipur %	All areas N	All areas %
Lack of capital	6	22.2	-		-		6	10.5
All other reasons	2	7.4	1	6.7	5	33.3	8	14.0
Total	27	100.0	15	100.0	15	100.0	57	100.0
How the stayers overcame severe economic hardship[2]								
Sold landed property	2	11.8	3	15.8	10	50.0	15	26.8
Mortgaged land	2	11.8	12	63.1	1	5.0	15	26.8
Helped by the relatives	3	17.6	-		3	15.0	6	10.7
Sold cattle	-		1	5.3	4	20.0	5	8.9
Sold house/part of house	3	17.6	-		1	5.0	4	7.1
Other ways	7	41.2	3	15.8	1	5.0	11	19.6
Total	17	100.0	19	100.0	20	100.0	56	100.0
Preferred place of movement in case of despairing situation in home village								
Other rural place	-		10	25.0	7	17.5	17	14.2
Urban centre	2	5.0	4	10.0	2	5.0	8	6.7
Uncertain	38	95.0	16	40.0	16	40.0	70	58.3
Not leave village under any circumstances	-		10	25.0	15	37.5	25	20.8
Total	40	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0	120	100.0
Advantage of staying back to the village								
Enjoyment of family life	10	29.4	11	27.5	7	17.9	28	24.8
Self-employment opportunities	9	26.5	11	27.5	16	41.0	36	31.9
Better earning	4	11.8	14	35.0	13	33.3	31	27.4
No advantage	11	32.3	4	10.0	3	7.7	18	15.9
Total[3]	34	100.0	40	100.0	39	100.0	113	100.0

1 People who have never moved.
2 This question was not applicable to all in the sample populations.
3 Seven cases did not reply.

parents and young siblings of the spouse, and to arrange education, housing and marriage for their dependents. As the land could not provide the villagers with an adequate means to achieve all these objective, mobility was essential for employment among virtually all adult males and specially the middle-aged villagers. It was calculated from village data that less than 20 percent of the middle-aged workers were complete stayers (i.e. had never moved for work). The corresponding ratios among the young adults and older age working males were much higher - 40 percent and 30 percent respectively.

Among the non-movers (all ages) the proportion of married people was also lower (62 percent as against 76 percent among the movers) and this can also be understood in the light of the above discussion. Education was another characteristic in which the non-movers seemed to differ quite significantly from movers particularly the circular migrants. Education also substantially influenced the movers' occupation structure. Since the stayers had a low level of education, they relied heavily upon agricultural activities as their sources of income and employment.

Reasons for staying

The non-movers were neither a random cross-section of the village population nor people who frequently desired to remain in the village under any circumstances. In table 3.12 the stayers' opinions and attitudes towards the strategy of immobility are

summarized. From their attitudes it was clear that the majority of them were living in a state of great uncertainty in the village as they could neither make any movement from the village nor earn a satisfactory living from local means.

Among the non-movers, there were some fundamental reasons for an inability to move out from the village, such as (i) shortage of family male man-power to look after the farm and family; (ii) incompetence for off-farm work due to lack of skills or education; (iii) impoverishment or hand to mouth living conditions; (iv) lack of relatives living in towns or other potential places of movement; and (v) ill health and old age of some stayers. Nevertheless, not all village stayers were dissatisfied with village life. A significant minority of them (mostly the big farmers or landlords) preferred to stay and find a living in the village permanently. This issue is discussed further in Chapter 8.

3.4 MOBILITY OF WOMEN

A serious omission in many migration studies in Bangladesh, as well as in other South Asian countries, is empirical information on the socio-economic characteristics and mobility behaviour of working women. Decennial census reports in Bangladesh have frequently contained statistics showing a high rate of female mobility, the bulk of which is supposedly associated

with the traditional flows of women as dependents or due to marriage. Moreover, census information on various socio-economic characteristics of working migrants are either very scanty or mostly ambiguous.

It is evident from case studies on population movement that the mobility rate of working women from rural areas is extremely low in the Indian sub-continent, and that Bangladeshi female workers would perhaps be the least mobile labour force in Asia or elsewhere. In this section, the major characteristics of female movers are examined with a view to establishing the main factors which deter rural women from moving out from their villages for work.

Female labour migration

In all the survey villages females revealed a low propensity to move outside their localities for work or attending schools. Only 42 females were classed as movers, of whom 11 had moved for study and the other 31 women to work. These female workers comprised less than two percent (1.91 percent) of the total active movers from the 14 survey villages. Twenty three of the women were active circular migrants and they comprised just under 4 percent of the total current migrants. In northern India, women migrants from 16 villages accounted for 7 percent of all working migrants (Connell et al. 1976, 42).

Chaudhury and Curlin (1975, 201) analysed the

reasons for out-migration from 101 villages in Matlab thana, Bangladesh. They found that about 13 percent (average ratio for 5 years data) of those who had left their village in search of "occupational opportunities" were females. But the study did not explain how many of those females really availed themselves of opportunities to work at the places of migration. Thus the exact number of female working migrants from Matlab villages was not available for direct comparison with other studies. However, in spite of methodological and definitional inconsistencies these empirical studies (including the present one) furnish fascinating insights into the sex differentials among working migrants originating from rural communities in Bangladesh and India.

Table 3.13 displays the major features of all working women by mover and stayer status. Altogether, there were 121 economically active females found in the 14 villages. A quarter of them (31 out of 121) were movers and the remaining three-quarters were stayers who had never left their native places for work. Compared with the families of male working movers, the families of women movers were mostly poor; over three-fifths of them (63 percent) came from the lower socio-economic classes and two-fifths of the families (41 percent) were absolute destitutes. However, the socio-economic condition of the female movers as shown in Table 3.13 was found to be slightly better as compared to that of

the stayer female workers. In this case, four out of five families (83 percent) originated from the lower class and three of them were extremely poor or destitute. A detailed analysis of the various attributes of working women in the context of their propensity or ability to move out from their villages is beyond the scope of this study. Having said this, a brief explanation is given here of some important factors related to the motives for mobility and immobility among working women.

Factors hindering labour force participation

The explanation of a low incidence of mobility among Bangladeshi women is rooted in the female's very limited participation in economic activities. According to the 1981 census the crude and the refined activity rates[11] of females were 2.8 and 4.3 percent respectively (for the male population, for instance, the rates were very much higher, such as 49.9 and 73.9 percent respectively). The corresponding figures for females in the 1974 census were 2.6 and 4.0 percent. Although there is evidence of a marginal increase in female participation in the workforce, Bangladesh has one of the lowest levels of female involvement in the labour force. For example, the crude economic activity rate

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11 The crude activity rate is the proportion of the total population of all ages that is aged ten years and above and are economically active. The refined activity rate is the proportion of the total population aged 10 years and over that is in this age group and economically active.

Table 3.13
Some Socio-economic Characteristics of Working Women and Their Families by Mover and Stayer Category, 1981.

Characteristics	Mover		Stayer	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
(Individual characteristics)	N 31		N 90	
Study area				
Rampal	19	61	22	24
Chandina	4	13	23	26
Sakhipur	8	26	45	50
All areas	31	100	90	100
Household head/nonhead				
Head	7	23	47	52
Nonhead	24	77	43	48
Age structure				
Under 15 years	4	13	15	17
15-34 years	11	35	25	28
35 and above	16	52	50	56
Median age	32 years		36 years	
Marital Status				
Unmarried	10	32	21	23
Married	9	29	13	14
Widowed/divorced	12	39	56	62
Education level				
Illiterate	20	65	73	81
Primary level	2	6	9	10
Secondary and above	9	29	8	9
Main occupation[1]				
Domestic servant	13	42	22	24
Grehasti	-		15	17
Picking paddy	-		9	10
Agricultural labour	-		8	9
Non-agricultural labour	3	10	-	
Salaried services	6	19	6	7
Small trade	2	6	5	6
Artisan (weaver/tailor)	-		4	4
Beggar	-		15	17
Others (including not stated cases)	7	23	6	
Approximate monthly income				
Below 100 taka	8	26	43	48
100 - 200	4	13	14	16
200 - 300	2	6	8	9
300 - 500	4	13	14	16
500 - 1000	5	16	6	7
Above 1000	2	6	1	1
Work for food and cloth mainly	7	23	4	4
(For movers only)				
Type of movement[2]				
Circular migration	24	77	NA	
Commuting	7	23		

contd.

Characteristics	Mover		Stayer	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Stream of movement				
Rural to rural	10	32	NA	
Rural to urban	21	68		
(Family characteristics)				
Total households	N 27		N 70	
Household type				
Simple nuclear	15	56	41	59
Joint family	7	26	11	16
Extended family	4	15	-	-
Single person household	1	4	17	24
Other types	-		1	1
Household tenural status				
Owner farmer	5	19	10	14
Owner cum lessor	4	15	10	14
Lessor only	7	26	14	20
Landless labour (farm/non farm)	4	15	3	4
Non-labour landless	6	22	30	43
Others	1	4	3	4
Approximate yearly income				
Up to 500 taka	-		7	10
501 - 1500 taka	2	7	22	31
1501 - 2500 taka	2	7	10	14
2501 - 5000 taka	7	26	14	20
5001 - 10000 taka	5	19	8	11
10001 - 20000 taka	5	19	4	6
Above 25000	6	22	5	7
Median income (in taka)	6120		2400	
Household socio-economic status [3]				
Upper class	5	19	2	3
Middle class	5	19	10	14
Lower class	17	63	58	83
Agricultural landholdings				
Average land per household (in acres)	0.83		0.77	
Percentage landless	41		50	
Percentage near landless (owned up to 0.50 acre)	26		27	
Gini coefficient	.725		.854	
Household size				
Average person per household	6.77		3.76	

1 Indicating destination occupation for movers and local occupation for stayers.
2 Among the 31 movers, there were only 2 ex movers (one migrant and one commuter).
3 See Chapter 8 for a discussion of socio-economic status and the definition of classes in Bangladesh.

among females in all less developed countries was 22.3 percent in 1970 as against only 2.5 percent in Bangladesh in 1974 (UN 1981a,252). The crude activity rates for men and women in the study villages, surveyed in 1981, were 48.0 and 2.0 percent respectively and the refined activity rates were correspondingly estimated to be 69.7 and 3.0 percent.

A number of studies (Arens and Van Beurden 1977; Cain et al. 1979; Bertocci 1974; and Ahmad 1984) argue convincingly that in Bangladesh, female particiation in the civilian workforce is very much conditioned by social taboos and values, class hierarchies, the patriarchy system and religious conservatism, especially the widely practised parda (purdah) system.[12] These socio-religious customs are practised more rigorously within the rural communities where a woman's place is generally considered to be in the home. Under the patriarchy system, there exists a clear and unambiguous segregation of labour between the male and female members of a household. Usually the man earns bread for the family and the woman does all non-earning domestic work such as cooking, cleaning, childcare etc. Paul Harrison (1981, 232) who has visited many Third

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12 The complex concept of purdah - a term that literally means "veil" or "curtain" broadly refers to the many practices related to the seclusion of women among the Muslim communities in different parts of the world (Singh 1984, 96). The level of observance of purdah seems to vary with class, status, education, wealth, place of living (urban/rural) and many more indiviual or group variables.

World countries, including Bangladesh, writes that a woman, in Bangladesh, will only work outside the home if the direst need drives her to do so.

The tendency towards higher mobility levels among poor women reveals some interesting trends. These movers prefer to migrate to urban places rather than commute between or migrate to rural areas. The main reason for this is that in a traditional village Muslim society, females lose their izzat (social prestige of a person and his/her family) when they move outside the home for doing any work. But in towns, such attitudes towards female outdoor work have gradually been changing. The fact is that generally within the rural communities, people are quite well-known to one another and accustomed to talk about one's izzat. However, when a woman comes to town she mostly remains unknown or anonymous in the new urban society, and thus she does not feel very much discomfort especially with regard to possible ruin of her or her family's izzat.

Another reason for movement is that poor female migrants generally do not have any rural means of living such as an adult male bread earner, arable land, and rich relatives. Urban pull factors such as higher wages, regular work and better quality of work are also attracting some women to work in town (Table 3.13).

Females in the upper socio-economic strata, are less likely to move for work than poorer women. Within the 14 survey villages only five women movers who

came from well educated wealthy families were recorded. All of them migrated to Dhaka capital for jobs in the public service. The good educational background of the migrants and their families induced them to break through the socio-religious restrictions on female mobility for work.

The numbers of women workers (mover or stayer) among the upper to middle class families are very small as compared to those from poorer households (Table 3.13). The principal reasons for this are (i) the families which come from better social and economic positions are usually conscious of their izzat, elitism, socio-religious values especially with respect to purdah and division of female labour (Bertocci 1974); (ii) in the rural areas, females (even the widowed and deserted ones) from prosperous households have sufficient means (land, male earner, rich relatives etc.) for a livelihood and they do not need to engage in economic activities within or outside the home.

Reasons for immobility

The mobility behaviour of working women cannot be understood fully without an explanation of reasons for immobility of the great majority of female workers (74 percent or 90 out of 121) who have stayed in their villages. Besides socio-religious restrictions, there are several other factors significantly related to the immobility of women. First, the vast majority of the stayer working women are very poor and illiterate, and

they are comparatively older than the female movers. Thus they are not as eligible for urban work.

Another reason is that their families are very small and mostly headed by widowed women; if they sometimes temporarily migrate alone, there is nobody left in the village to look after their children. Moreover, they do not have any savings to meet the cost of migration. Third, many of them fear that if the whole family leaves the village (i.e. migrates), someone will (illegally) occupy their tiny plots of land. The second and third obstacles together have a substantial negative impact on mobility trends, particularly among families which are poor and headed by women (as is evident in Table 3.13 there are only seven women out of 31 movers, who were heads of households). The number of female migrants who were heads of households was very small (only 3 out of the 24 migrant women).

3.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined some characteristics of the environment within which contemporary mobility behaviour in rural Bangladesh is set. The mobility and immobility of working people in rural Bangladesh were then cosidered within the framework of a space-time typology presented in Chapter 2. The most significant findings in this chapter concerning forms of mobility

can be summarized as follows:

1. Internal population movement of working people in Bangladesh is essentially circular, involving temporary displacement from a home base rather than the conventional linear type of permanent relocation. Commuting, circular migration, and seasonal migration are the three broad types of circulatory movements. Permanent relocation from villages usually follows participation in some form of circulation.

2. Options for permanent migration within and across the territory of Bangladesh have been narrowing, and this is reinforcing the significance of non-permanent reciprocal movement in rural life.

3. Empirical evidence from each study location suggests that among all movers, the proportion of circular migrants has been increasing and this trend is likely to continue with growth in both the urban population and rural poverty.

4. Like many other Third World countries, options for intra-rural and inter-rural circulation have gradually been narrowing. Data from the present study indicates that six movements out of every ten were oriented towards town. The proportion of rural-urban movement in commuting and seasonal migration was almost fifty:fifty; but the flow of circular migration was virtually uni-directional. Out of every ten migrants nine went to towns and cities.

5. The predominance of the circular pattern of mobility suggests that conventional statistics on migration and urbanization in Bangladesh, have greatly underestimated the volume of population movement. These two processes need to be viewed and measured in the context of a more realistic definition of movement.

6. Seasonal migration is most closely linked to the traditional agricultural system and poor transport conditions. As these two dimensions to rural livelihood are modernized there has been a change from seasonal migration to daily movement such as commuting.

7. Traditionally, in many parts of the Third World, movement for employment is dominated by males while migration associated with marriage is most common for females. Yet there are many countries in Asia and Africa where female participation in economic activities as well as in movement is fairly noticeable, and above all, is rising. Perhaps Bangladesh is one of those few countries where women have been least absorbed into the civil labour force and in work-related movement. Furthermore, this pattern is most unlikely to change very much, especially in the rural areas.

CHAPTER 4

PATTERNS OF COMMUTING AND CIRCULAR MIGRATION

Spatial and temporal dimensions of commuting and non-seasonal circular migration, the two dominant forms of internal movement in rural Bangladesh, are examined in this chapter. Commuting in search of livelihood has become a part of the daily routine of a large number of working males living in rural communities. Villagers, whose primary occupations are not related to farm activities (such as tradesmen, non-agricultural wage earners, salary earners, and village artisans) regularly commute to work outside their home village. In order to seek additional income, farmers also often participate in ff-farm work by commuting. In rural Bangladesh, there is a strong desire among adult males to have two occupations, one off-farm and the other usually from farm activities e.g. cultivation of land (owned or rented) or work as day-labour on another person's farm.

Variations with respect to the magnitude, significance and spatial patterns of commuting were found in the three study areas. Much of the variation is due to the region's agricultural system (the intensity of farm activities, cropping patterns, levels of technology and yields or productivity) and the level of accessibility to rural and urban off-farm employment. Given the scanty information in the available literature

on the impact of these factors on commuting of villagers, a comprehensive analysis of this form of movement is presented in this chapter and in Chapter 5.

Circular migration which predominantly involves rural-urban migrants, has also become firmly established in Bangladesh rural life and economy. The increasing importance of circular migration is associated with rural overcrowding, improvement in rural-urban accessibility, the development of rural education, and the growing dependency of rural families on a dual income strategy (income from rural and urban sectors). Most of these factors were discussed in Chapter 2 where the context of rural-urban migration and urbanization in Bangladesh is described in some detail.

This chapter is divided into two broad sections. Section 4.1 presents an analysis of commuting patterns and processes in the three survey areas, with particular reference to trends over time and the major movement streams. In section 4.2 the process of circular migration is examined with particular preference to the temporal and spatial characteristics of moves by villagers in Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur.

4.1 SPACE-TIME DIMENSIONS OF COMMUTING

Commuting from rural settlements is not a new phenomenon in Bangladesh, although the space-time pattern of this movement type has changed substantially in response to population pressure on rural land and

employment, improvements in transportation, the spread of the urban network, and uneven regional agricultural development. A great variety of commuting patterns was found in the three survey areas which, as has been shown in Chapter 3, are located in regions with distinctive agricultural systems and transportation networks. In this section of Chapter 4, the analysis focuses on the incidence of commuting; directions and destinations of movement; and the temporal dimensions of these oscillating movements. The occupational characteristics of a sample of commuters from Rampal, whose movements to and from their rural homes were recorded over a 12 month period, are examined in Chapter 5.

4.1.1 The incidence of commuting

Almost one third (30 percent) of males aged 15 years and over from the survey villages had been commuters, and 23 percent were still active in this form of movement from their respective home-village. The incidence of commuting varied quite markedly from one study area to another. In Rampal, for example, there were 41 commuters per 100 males aged 15 years and above, out of which 36 were still active. The corresponding figures for Chandina and Sakhipur are 34 (22 active commuters) and 17 (12 active commuters) respectively. Given these differential rates, the volume of commuters also varies considerably among the study areas (Figure 4.1a). The ratio of commuters was approximately 3:2:1

for Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur respectively.

Rampal and Chandina

The heaviest rates of commuting were recorded in Rampal, an area which has long had a distinctive type of 'commuter culture' well adapted to the local agricultural system and interlocked with the broad network of rural and urban employment markets. These are described in some detail in Chapter 5. Being close to major employment centres and obtaining higher yields from their native farms, Rampalese are less prone to migrate elsewhere than people from the other study areas. For this reason Rampal has remained one of the most densely inhabited rural areas in Bangladesh, and commuting has become more popular than any other type of mobility (Table 3.8). In Chapter 5, it is shown how Rampalese from many different occupational backgrounds earn part of their annual income through commuting and another part through local farm-based activities.

Movers from Chandina also tend to prefer commuting to other forms of mobility, although the rate of commuting from here is lower than that from Rampal. The main reason for this is that unlike Rampal, Chandina is located quite some distance (60 miles) from the country's biggest urban and industrial agglomeration (Figure 1.1). In the absence of an easily accessible major urban centre here, the commuters mostly travel between local and regional rural trade-cum-service centres (haats).

Very high population densities and intensive farming also favour commuting rather than long-term displacement. With the introduction of IRRI varieties of rice, Chandina gradually moved from being a rice deficit area to a rice surplus area. At present the area successfully grows three rice crops, or two rice and one cash crop (mainly potato) per farm-year (Figure 3.3). In fact, multiple cropping and labour intensive farming demands large scale farm participation which fluctuates from season to season, crop to crop, and from farm job to job (such as ploughing, weeding, harvesting etc.).

Good crops and a frequently fluctuating demand of farm-work thus encourage Chandina movers to commute, which makes it easier to earn off-farm income without losing one's farm income at home. While interviewing circular migrants, it was often noticed that a large number of salary earners, particularly school teachers and thana level office workers, tended to commute if they secured a job, or could transfer their existing job to a place near to their home village.

Sakhipur

A completely different pattern has been established in Sakhipur where commuting was found to be one of the least attractive forms of movement to resident villagers (Tables 3.7 and 3.8). Unlike Rampal and Chandina, the lack of transportation facilities in Sakhipur limits the volume and rates of commuting, and

in particular it severely restricts the volume of rural-urban commuting (Table 4.1). Another important factor which discourages commuting from Sakhipur (but promotes seasonal and non-seasonal migration) is the traditional agricultural system, especially the ancestral cropping patterns and less intensive farming techniques.

Generation after generation, Sakhipur farmers have been growing traditional varieties of rice for food, and jute mainly for cash. These crops are more vulnerable to diseases, require long cropping periods, depend heavily on monsoon rain, and finally give poor yields. In addition to this, crop failure due to natural causes such as drought, flood, late rain, heavy rain, and pest attack is a common phenomenon in and around Sakhipur. As a result, farmers and farm labourers are gradually losing their interest in agriculture and seeking off-farm occupations, mostly through a seasonal or non-seasonal migration instead of regular commuting.

Another factor which obviously deters Sakhipur people from commuting is the long agricultural slack season(s) - a characteristic associated with traditional cropping patterns only. Under this system (which is now non-existent in Rampal and Chandina), farmers have little work between the times when crops are planted and harvested. In this situation a significant number of part-time farmers and day labourers prefer seasonal migration especially migration to towns. Seasonal

migration is more profitable than being un/underemployed in their home village, or earning a meagre off-farm income through commuting to neighbouring markets.

4.1.2 Intra-rural commuting

The significance of rural destinations

Results from the field surveys indicate that compared with circular migrants, commuters make different choices with regard to their preferred direction of movement. The aggregate statistics from the three survey areas show that around half (53 percent) of all the commuters moved between rural destinations on their last trip away from home (Table 4.1). Thirty four percent of them went directly to towns, while the remaining 13 percent of commuters travelled in both rural and urban directions. The choice of stream(s) mostly depends on the nature of the individual's job and the geographical setting of his area of origin. On this basis, different patterns of commuting were found in the three study areas.

The majority of commuters from Rampal (55 percent) chose neighbouring towns as their destination. In Chandina and Sakhipur a different pattern was found to be true. In the latter study area, three-quarters of the commuters restricted their movements to neighbouring rural settlements - mainly because the area is poorly linked with nearby urban job markets. A significant percentage of commuters from Chandina (25

Table 4.1

Streams of Commuting from Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur, 1981

(percentages)

Stream	Rampal	Chandina	Sakhipur	All areas	N
Rural to rural (RR)	41	56	76	53	561
Rural to urban (RU)	55	19	11	34	364
Both RR and RU	4	25	13	13	139
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	
N	495	376	193		1064

percent) and Sakhipur (13 percent) were also found to commute to both urban and rural places. They mostly include rickshaw pullers, auto rickshaw drivers, weavers and some traders from Chandina, and goat traders, rabi crop traders and milkmen from Sakhipur (Figure 4.3).

The flow of commuters to and from village settlements in Bangladesh is deeply integrated into rural socio-economic life. The spatial organization of places of human activities in rural Bangladesh (homesteads, market places, schools, administrative offices and other service centres) only makes sense in the context of linkages afforded by commuting. In this section the spatial patterns of journeys to work which involve movement over distances of at least two miles from the commuter's village home are examined. Those villagers who always work very close to their homes are excluded. These are mainly full-time farmers and farm-labourers -a very small group of villagers who walk less than two miles from their homes to their places of work (Ali 1980).

Diversity in patterns

The rural commuter's journey to work is directed mainly to the village markets which play a vital role in the mobility pattern of traders, village artisans, salary earners, and non-agricultural workers within rural areas in Bangladesh (Figure 4.1). Rural to rural commuters usually move between a number of places at different locations and distances from their homes.

This is particularly evident among the traders, artisans and others who generally commute to periodic markets (Figure 5.2b), but is also less commonly found among the office-workers, school teachers and factory workers who mostly commute to one destination.

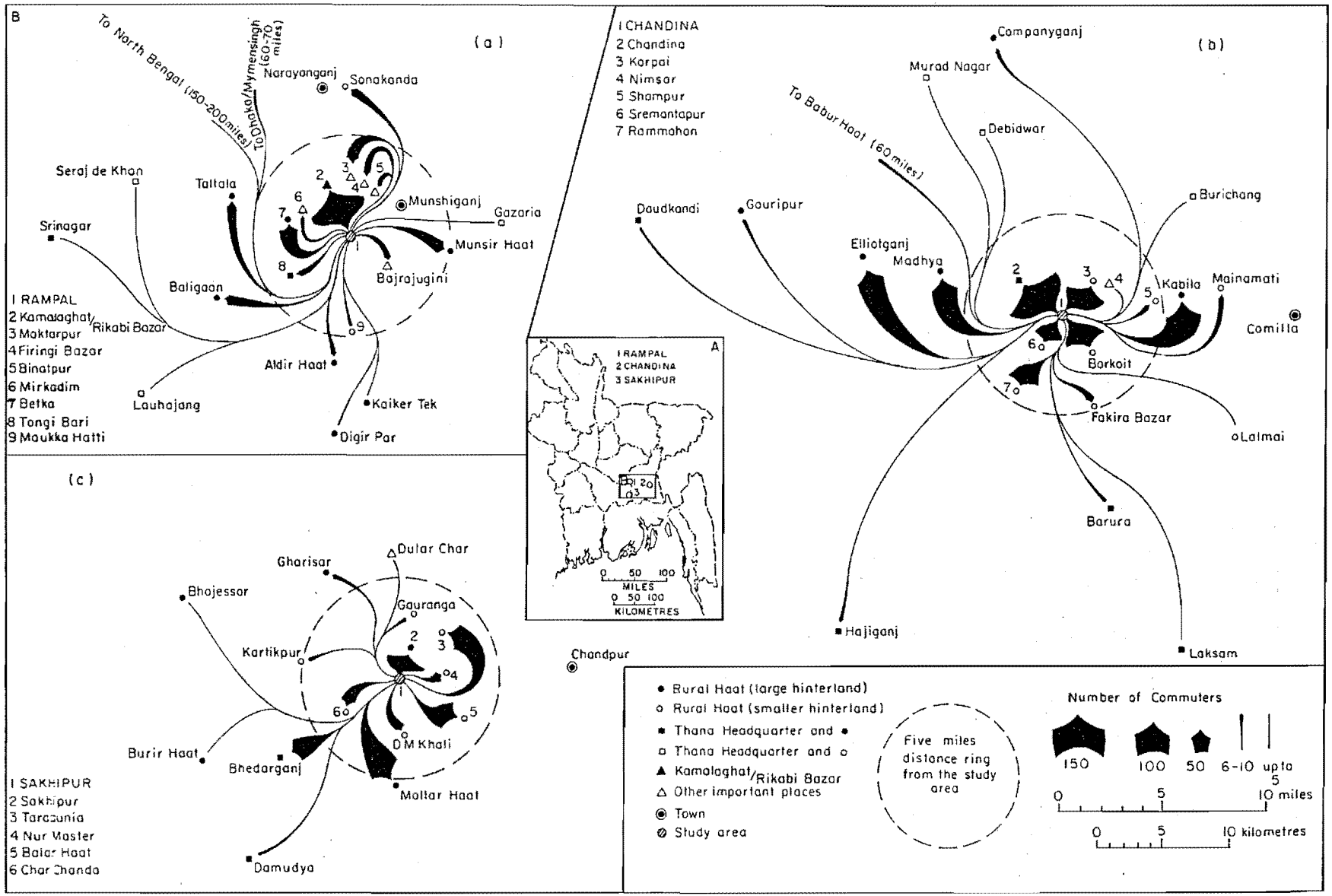
In Rampal, 200 rural commuters made 463 commuting flows between 20 to 25 destinations (Figure 4.1a). A flow was counted when a person was found to commute regularly (daily, weekly or seasonally) to one particular place for his work. Thus, on average, a rural commuter from Rampal has more than two (2.3) commuting destinations. Similarly, a commuter from Chandina and Sakhipur moves to 4.6 and 4.4 rural destinations respectively, mostly rural markets. These findings indicate that the circulation patterns of Rampal's commuters are less diverse than those of commuters in the other two survey areas. A large number of Rampalese, particularly the factory workers, porters, milkmen and office-workers, usually commute to one place instead of two or more places like traders.

Commuting to factories and haats

The pattern of destination choices for rural commuters from Rampal is strongly influenced by the agglomeration of factories in and near the Kamalaghat-Rikabi Bazar trade centre. This place has evolved into a semi-urban settlement. Figure 4.1a shows that 60 percent of intra-rural commuting was to that settlement. Kamalaght-Rikabi Bazar alone attracted 36 percent of the

Figure 4·1

RURAL TO RURAL COMMUTING FLOWS FROM RAMPAL, CHANDINA AND SAKHIPUR, 1981



total flows. Villagers from a wide range of occupations commute every day to that centre (Figure 4.2). Milkmen go to the Rikabi Bazar daily market; traders mostly follow the same route.

The largest group of rural commuters from Rampal is wage earners such as factory workers, porters and rickshaw pullers (Figure 4.3). They commute almost every day to earn their daily livelihood. Factory workers and porters mainly work at Kamalaghat-Rikabi Bazar. Some of them also go to Betka, Mokterpur and Binatpur factory areas. Rickshaw pullers are seen around the important rural settlements but most traffic still goes through the Rampal-Rikabi Bazar road. Salary earners also make their routine daily movements mainly towards the above mentioned trade centre and factory locations.

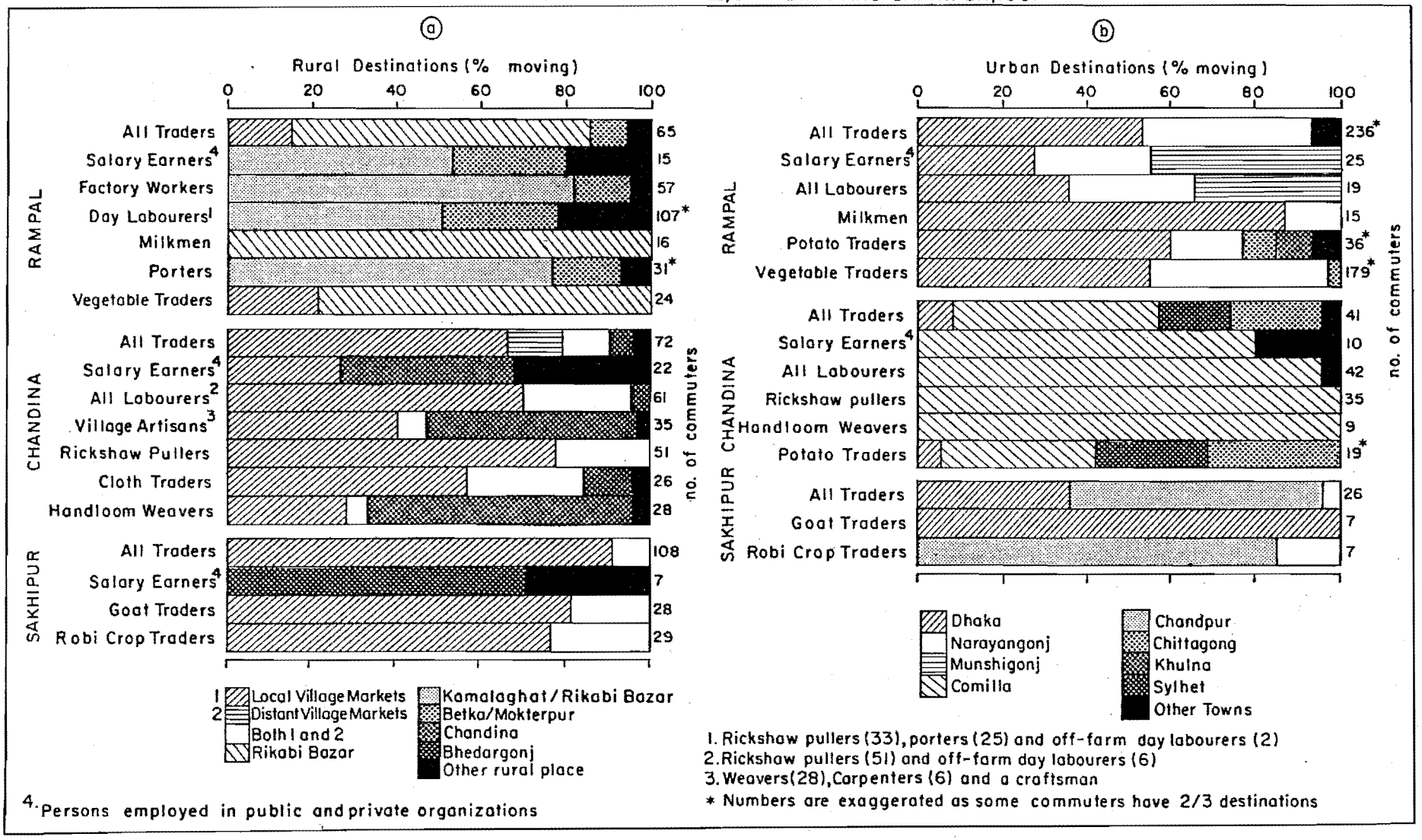
In Chandina and Sakhipur, rural commuters predominantly travel to different rural haats for work. Their destination patterns are largely synchronized with the haat-day cycles of those markets. This pattern has changed in Rampal with the rise of Kamalaghat-Rikabi Bazar trading centre which remains open seven days a week instead of following any weekly meeting schedule as with village markets. However, a significant proportion of rural commuters (around 40 percent) from Rampal still moved to different village markets.

Frequency of moving

Generally, commuters working at village markets

Figure 4·2

MAJOR OCCUPATION TYPES AND RURAL-URBAN DESTINATIONS OF COMMUTERS FROM RAMPAL, CHANDINA AND SAKHIPUR, 1981



4. Persons employed in public and private organizations

1. Rickshaw pullers (33), porters (25) and off-farm day labourers (2)
2. Rickshaw pullers (51) and off-farm day labourers (6)
3. Weavers (28), Carpenters (6) and a craftsman

* Numbers are exaggerated as some commuters have 2/3 destinations

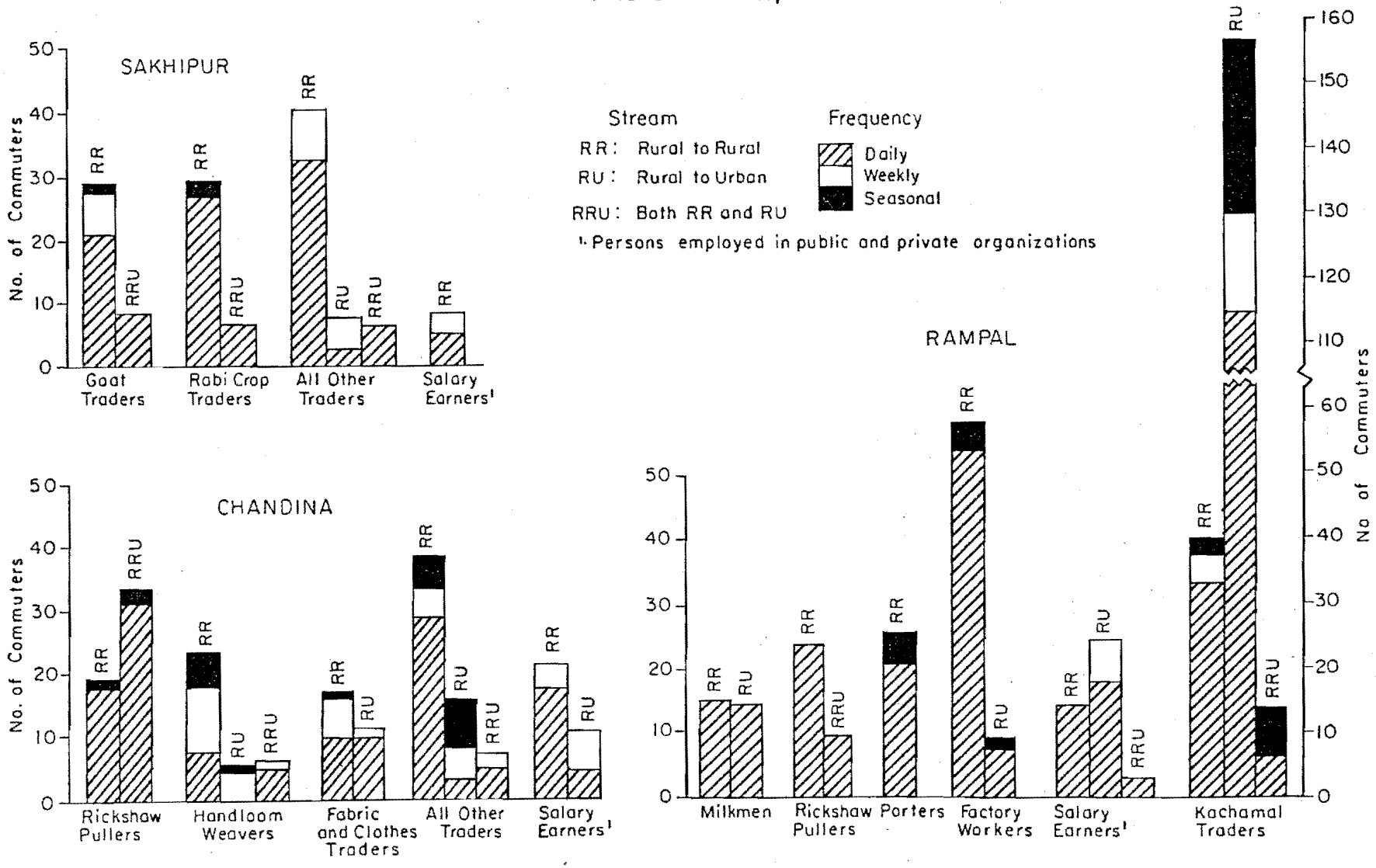
move daily (not necessarily every day). But some movers prefer to travel weekly and seasonally depending on the nature of their work at the destination and the level of involvement with grehasti (agricultural activities) at home.

Labourers such as rickshaw pullers, porters, factory workers move more frequently than others as they are landless or near landless and have the lowest level of involvement with grehasti. A minor group of labourers commutes seasonally when the demand of local agricultural employment falls or wages for farm work decrease. Handloom weavers from Chandina commute to rural haats (mostly Chandina) to buy thread and sell woven cloth. They commute daily (3 to 4 days per week), weekly (once or twice per week) and seasonally (in the winter season).

A wide variety of traders (mostly of the pedlar type) participate in rural to rural commuting. In fact, they are the single largest group of working commuters in any rural region of Bangladesh. A large number of them deal with agricultural products such as Kachamal, potatoes, rabi crops, paddy/rice etc. and thus, their frequency of movement fluctuates from season to season (Figure 5.1). During peak seasons of those trades (which usually correspond to harvesting seasons) the mobility rates of traders increase. Seasonal traders launch their business mostly in the peak trading/harvesting season.

Figure 4·3

MAJOR OCCUPATION TYPES OF COMMUTERS BY STREAM, FREQUENCY AND VOLUME OF COMMUTING FROM RAMPAL, CHANDINA AND SAKHIPUR, 1981



After the village markets, the thana is the second most attractive destination for rural to rural commuters. This particular administrative centre mainly attracts salary earners (Figure 4.2); and the centre offers a small number of jobs to the local commuters. One obvious reason is that most of the official staff at thana centres are non-local people (i.e. migrants) as they are usually recruited from other thanas or districts. In addition, the number of thanas within the rural areas is very small (less than 400) compared with the number of village markets (which number more than 6500).

Distances travelled and transport

Characteristics of the various distances traversed by commuters to rural areas from Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur are summarized in Table 4.2. The median distance of commuter travel found in the three survey locations was approximately three miles and the mean distances were 3.90, 4.91 and 4.16 miles respectively. The majority of flows take place within a five mile radius of the commuters' home.

A comparative picture shows that Chandina commuters travel slightly longer distances than the commuters from the other two areas. The difference is mainly due to better transport which makes it easier for a Chandina commuter to go up to 10 to 12 miles for work. Besides walking, a commuter from Chandina can travel to local and distant village markets by rickshaw and some

Table 4.2

Distribution of Intra-rural Commuting Flows from the Study Area(s) by Distance

(Cumulative percentages)

Distance (in miles)	Rampal	Chandina	Sakhipur	All areas No. of Flows
2 - 3	65	52	49	54 1066
4	68	61	65	64 189
5	77	65	83	73 186
6	86	83	84	84 217
7	86	83	97	88 76
8	94	85	97	91 56
9	95	93	97	95 84
10	95	95	97	96 17
11 - 15	97	95	99	97 22
15+	100	100	100	100 64
Total Flows	463	951	563	1977
Median Distance	3	3	3	3
Mean Distance	3.90	4.91	4.16	4.48
SD	2.42	4.02	2.44	3.31
CV	61.89	81.01	58.75	74.06
No. of rural commuters	200	206	129	535
No. of destinations per commuter	2.31	4.61	4.36	3.69

important markets by bus. The latter mode of transport makes Daudkandi, Companigonj, and Laksam, for example, accessible to daily commuters (Figure 4.1). Rampal and Sakhipur rural commuters mostly travel short distances, mainly due to the lack of rural bus services. Rampal has rickshaw transport for rural commuting; but in Sakhipur, commuters solely depend on walking.

The variation in commuting distances depends greatly on the types of transport available to the movers. Commuters from most occupational and economic backgrounds walk to work due to the lack of modern transport between village residences and rural markets. Privately owned transport, such as bicycles and motor cycles, is rare as the villagers are generally poor. In the 14 study villages, less than five percent of the 813 commuters owned a bicycle. This particular vehicle is unsuitable for the pedlar type of traders who comprise the single largest group of commuters working at different haats. There are also substantial differences in the quality of rural roads (for different vehicles) from region to region and from season to season.

4.1.3 Rural-urban commuting

The flows of commuters between the study villages and urban settlements were restricted to a dozen towns, of which six received merely a fraction (5 percent) of the total flow. The relative share of commuting flows received by various towns from Rampal, Chandina and

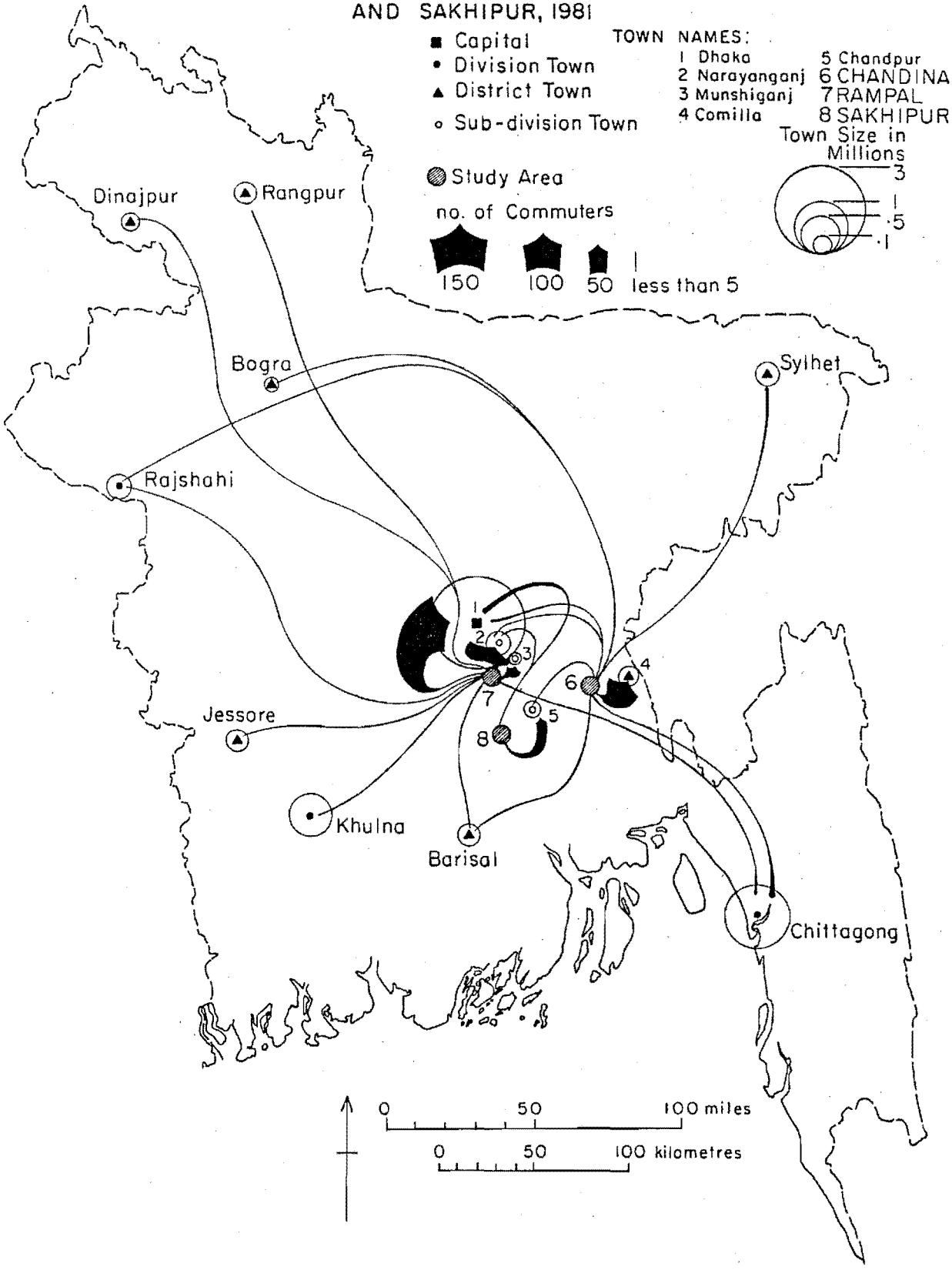
Sakhipur is shown in Figure 4.4. During the period of field research, 374 active commuters (236 from Rampal, 108 from Chandina and 30 from Sakhipur) were found to be commuting to towns and a total of 481 townward flows were recorded for these people. Obviously some commuters, who were found to commute to more than one urban centre, made two or more flows each. Rampal, being close to the country's biggest urban agglomeration, generated 64 percent of all the urban flows recorded. Chandina and Sakhipur shared 28 percent and 8 percent respectively.

The major destinations

Rampal and Chandina have a better rural-urban commuting network than Sakhipur, which is poorly linked to Chandpur and Dhaka towns. Chandina has a wider network of commuter linkages, but still the largest number of urban flows (72 percent) ended up in Comilla, the nearest town to the area. Chittagong, Sylhet and Dhaka received 12 percent, 6 percent and 4 percent of the total flows respectively. The study found three main urban centres frequented by Rampalese commuters. Dhaka, the capital, attracted 47 percent of the total urban flows from Rampal. Narayangonj received 37 percent and Munshigonj accounted for 11 percent. A small number of commuters (mainly potato dealers) from Rampal as well as from Chandina, were also found to commute infrequently to distant urban centres as shown in Figure 4.2b.

Figure 4·4

RURAL TO URBAN COMMUTING FLOWS FROM RAMPAL, CHANDINA AND SAKHIPUR, 1981



The lower level of commuting to towns from Chandina and Sakhipur was found to be determined mainly by distance and transport conditions. The number of towns within a reasonable daily commuting distance (usually 10 - 15 miles) from these two rural areas, is very small. In fact, only Comilla and Chandpur are within this distance of Chandina and Sakhipur respectively. The bulk of the urban commuting flows from Chandina and Sakhipur stopped at these two towns.

Other towns (including Dhaka and Chittagong cities) which have fewer commuter connections with those two rural communities, did not attract substantial numbers of commuters only because of distance. Further analysis of data shows that long-distance commuting trips were mostly made by a few wealthy business commuters. In Chandina, inter-district potato traders/dealers are of this kind. They commute to different potato-storing centres from season to season (Figure 3.3) and to different towns from time to time for marketing potatoes to dealers/wholesalers. In Sakhipur, long distance urban commuters are mainly goat traders and a few vegetable traders and milkmen. Economically, the former group is better placed than the latter groups.

Long-distance commuting

The process of long-distance urban commuting from Sakhipur was found to be different to that in Chandina. In Sakhipur, almost all long-distance urban commuters

were destined for Dhaka city. Goat traders regularly commuted to Dhaka once a week to sell goats to urban butchers. The rest (of the days) of the week, they commuted to different rural haats where they bought goats directly from the individual owners. Vegetable and milk traders usually commuted to Dhaka during winter months (November to February) when Sakhipur produces surplus vegetables and milk.

Both these groups of commuters work separately, forming a gang of a few fellow commuters. A vegetable trading gang consists of (vegetable) buyers and suppliers - who change their job by rotation. The buyers commute to different rural haats daily and buy vegetables from the growers. Suppliers, on the other hand, carry the goods to Dhaka city market where they sell it to urban Kachamal dealers. Following the same process, a milk-trading gang buys milk from rural markets and supplies it to the Dhaka urban market.

This process of rural-urban commuting has been developed recently by vegetable traders and milkmen in Sakhipur. By forming a gang or partnership, the commuters are now able to move to a distant city market daily. In addition to this, the act of partnership has enabled them to reduce transport costs and to increase their capital investment. Obviously, the process has evolved mainly due to the long distance and slow-speed transport that has been present between Sakhipur and Dhaka city. Given the better rural-urban transport

linkages, Rampal has established a different process of rural-urban commuting (discussed in chapter 5), where individual vegetable traders or milkmen rather than groups commute daily between Rampal and Dhaka-Narayangonj urban markets.

The case of Rampal

In Rampal, rural-urban commuting flows showed a different pattern (Figure 4.4). Ninety-five percent of the commuters had one of three towns (Dhaka, Narayangonj and Munshigonj) as their destination. The pattern of flows to those towns apparently indicates that the volume of commuting is positively correlated to distance. For example, from 18 miles away, Dhaka attracted 47 percent of Rampal urban commuters. Narayangonj, eight miles apart from Rampal, received 37 percent of the commuters. Only 11 percent of the commuters went to Munshigonj - an adjacent town (3 miles distance) to Rampal.

Closer inspection of the data revealed that this pattern has evolved under certain conditions. Firstly, although the three towns lie widely apart, they are located within the daily commuting radius of Rampal. Secondly, city size and functions largely influence the commuters' choice of destination. Dhaka, a multi-functional capital city has already attained a population of almost four million. Narayangonj, an industrial, commercial and administrative city with a population of nearly 300,000, attracts various commuters

from Rampal every day. In comparion to those cities, Munshigonj is a slow growing town with a population of only 40,000. The town has been developed primarily as an administrative centre (sub-division headquarters) and has very little commercial attraction. Thirdly, cheap water transport between Rampal and Dhaka-Narayangonj cities (via Katpatti), makes commuting profitable to the Kachamal pedlars, milkmen and other daily movers.

Occupation and destination

A comparative picture of commuting patterns showing stream, frequency and volume of movement of major occupation groups found in the three study locations, is given in Figure 4.3. In Rampal, urban commuters have opted for a wide variety of occupations such as Kachamal trade, milkmen, rickshaw pulling and service in offices and factories. Each of these occupation groups has developed a distinct type of commuting pattern which is analysed in depth in Chapter 5. The pattern of destination choices also varies from occupation to occupation (Figure 4.2). Generally, the commuters with trade and business interests (except some potato traders) prefer to commute to Dhaka and Narayangonj cities. Salary earners, likewise, tend to commute to Munshigonj, Narayangonj and Dhaka towns.

Commuters who deal with potatoes tend to move to neighbouring towns as well as to distant urban centres. Apart from Dhaka/Narayangonj cities, Rampal traders

travel as far as Chittagong, Khulna, Barisal and major towns in the North Bengal region - where they supply potatoes regularly on demand. Chandina traders mostly go to the towns of Comilla, Chittagong and Sylhet for supplying as well as for storing purposes.

Rampal vegetable traders mostly commute to towns, especially Dhaka and Narayangonj. In fact, vegetable traders from Rampal never commute to Munshigonj which usually gets vegetables from adjacent villages. Dhaka receives more vegetable traders from Rampal than Narayangonj (Figure 4.2). However, further analysis revealed that small traders tend to commute to Narayangonj mainly because of the short distance, and that big traders prefer to go to Dhaka to make a better profit.

Vegetable farmers who usually take produce to towns are more likely to go to Narayangonj so that they can return home quickly and take part in farm work. However, some days (mostly in winter) when they harvest in bulk, they are more likely to commute to Dhaka city market to sell their vegetables at a better price. Vegetable traders are often considered as daily movers, but in Rampal a proportion of them were found to make their movements weekly (9 percent) as well as seasonally (16 percent). The latter group commute mainly during winter time when Rampal grows vegetables more extensively than during other seasons.

Weekly traders move two ways. One group, mostly

vegetable farmers, go to town once or twice per week. The other usually stays in town (where they run their vegetable business) and visit home every week. They are permanent to quasi-permanent vegetable traders.

Bi-directional commuting

In Chandina and Sakhipur, a town-going commuter was often identified as a bi-directional mover - one who usually commutes to town as well as to rural areas. Generally he moves to town weekly or twice a week and to neighbouring rural destinations daily (not necessarily every day). This particular process of commuting is widely established among rickshaw pullers, weavers, and cloth traders in Chandina and goat traders and rabi crop traders in Sakhipur.

Analysis of this process revealed that rural-urban transport friction (such as long distance, infrequent service, slow speed, higher cost of transport) is inversely related to the frequency of their movement. The higher the friction the lower will be the frequency of commuting. Sakhipur goat traders, for example, commute to Dhaka once per week; but rabi crop traders go to Chandpur twice per week. Another example is RRU (rural to rural and rural to urban) rickshaw pullers. In Chandina, they usually prefer to commute to Comilla town weekly (once or twice per week) rather than daily. Obviously this pattern indicates their tendency to avoid daily long distance rickshaw

pulling at the cost of their health.

Chandina has large numbers of handloom weavers and cloth traders (fabrics and clothing). A significant number of them travel weekly to the town of Comilla. Their pattern of commuting is partly influenced by rural-urban transport friction, but is mainly synchronized with local rural market cycles and the weekly haat day at Comilla town.

Weekly commuting is popular among the weavers in Chandina. The entire group of weavers moving between rural and urban areas are, in fact, genuine weekly commuters (Figure 4.3). A few of them commute during winter weeks of the year. The RRU weavers and cloth traders commute to town weekly along with their routine daily movement to rural haats.

Commuting of salary earners

In both Rampal and Chandina, town-going salary earners were all found to commute to neighbouring towns. The number of commuters in this occupation category has been increasing with the improvement of rural-urban transport. Given Rampal's better rural-urban transport network, the majority of salary earners (65 percent) commute between village and town. Nearly 45 percent of these town-going commuters went to the nearest town - Munshigonj. The rest moved to Narayangonj and Dhaka cities. In Chandina, urban-destined salary earning commuters mostly went to Comilla. A few of them also commute to Mainamati cantonment (a satellite town

of Comilla). In Sakhipur, salary earners were found to be unable to commute to town as the area, up till now, remains relatively isolated from urban centres for daily movers.

The frequency of commuting by salary earners varies geographically. Rampalese are more likely to commute daily. Chandina movers, by contrast, tend to commute weekly (Figure 4.3). This pattern has developed as a result of differential levels of distance friction. For example, commuting to towns from Rampal, is cheaper, easier and involves shorter distances than commuting from Chandina. Weekly commuters from both Rampal and Chandina usually stay at their destinations (towns) and visit home most weekends as well as on holidays.

4.2 SPACE-TIME DIMENSIONS OF CIRCULAR MIGRATION

There are two distinct types of circular migration - seasonal and non-seasonal (i.e. regular). The latter is widely practised and is the dominant form of internal migration in the country (Tables 3.7 and 3.8). This section is concerned with non-seasonal circular migration. Since the end of colonial rule in India in 1947, the migration trends and patterns in Bangladesh have changed. A brief account of these changes was presented in Chapter 2. The analysis here focuses on the contemporary trends, patterns and variations in circular migration in the study areas.

4.2.1 The incidence of circular migration

It was established in Chapter 3 that circular migration is the second major form of movement by working males from rural areas (Tables 3.7 and 3.8). Following commuting, it draws a large number of people from different occupation and economic backgrounds away from their villages. Among adult males aged 15 years and above, the rates (per 100 people) of circular migrants recorded in Rampal, Chandina, and Sakhipur were 26, 17 and 23 respectively. Rampal, with its proximity to the largest urban agglomeration, had more circular migrants than the other two areas. But the region did not show such a difference in number of male migrants from the other two areas, as was the case with commuters.

The rate of circular migration from one study area to another varies less significantly than the rates of commuting and seasonal migration. There are two main reasons for this. Firstly, it is evident that the magnitude of commuting and seasonal migration largely depends on the intensity of farm activities and transport conditions. These two variables have less impact on the flow of circular migration. Second, as Bangladesh is a very small country, villagers from various parts of the country are able to migrate to towns within a small range of distances.

Chandina and Sakhipur

Residents in Chandina recorded a lower rate of

circular migration than was found in either Rampal or Sakhipur. One reason for this is that in Chandina, like Rampal, commuting acts as a substitute for migration. Another cause of the relatively low migration rate in Chandina is the impact of agricultural development, especially increases in productivity of land and intensity of cultivation through application of the HYV technology. As a result, villagers who have a substantial amount of land might have been less interested in migrating elsewhere. Such an attitude among the landowners in Chandina was often mentioned during surveying. A study from another part of Bangladesh also argued that improvement in agriculture and the resultant increase in local job opportunities, seems to reduce the propensity to migrate (Chaudhury 1978a).

A different pattern of mobility was found in Sakhipur survey villages. Here circular migration rather than commuting was more prevalent. In this particular area, both seasonal and non-seasonal migration have become almost equally important. This pattern has evolved mainly due to the limited scope for frequent short-distance movement (i.e. commuting) in and around Sakhipur. As the region is not suitable for HYV technology, and lacks good transport, villagers from different walks of life are forced to migrate to earn the total or part of their annual household income.

Recent upsurge in circular migration

Chapter 2 has reviewed the historical background of internal migration in Bangladesh, and it was noted there that the rapid increase in rural out-migration for livelihood is a recent phenomenon in this part of the world. Similar trends were also observed in the present study areas. The level of out-migration was very low up until the end of the 1950s; gained momentum during the 1960s; and finally the level reached a launching-stage in the early 1970s. Since then, migratory flows of working males from rural areas have continued to increase rapidly.

Similar patterns will be found at the urban end if urban in-migration trends are examined through time, as rural out-migrants are predominantly oriented towards cities and towns. One recent study (Centre for Urban Studies 1982, 51), for example, has focused on Dhaka City in-migration patterns, and the findings largely correspond to those found in the rural areas.

4.2.2 Streams of circular migration

Data from each study village indicated that circular migrants from rural regions are overwhelmingly oriented towards urban centres. On an average, out of ten migrants, nine went to cities and towns (Table 4.3). A similar picture has also been found in several other studies concerned with internal migration and/or urbanization in Bangladesh (Chaudhury and Curlin 1975,

Table 4.3

Streams of Circular Migration from Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur, 1981

Stream	Rampal		Chandina		Sakhipur		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Rural to Rural (RR)	28	8.92	32	16.84	27	10.11	87	11.2
Rural to Urban (RU)	286	91.08	158	83.16	240	89.89	684	88.72
Total	314	100	190	100	267	100	771	100

Khan 1982). The driving force behind this rural-urban drift is the fact that the scope for inter-rural migration for employment in Bangladesh has gradually been diminishing.

Intra-rural circular migration

The opportunity for intra-rural migration of people, especially peasants, in Bangladesh was severely constrained when the country separated from India in 1947. During the last three decades the situation has deteriorated further due to increased population pressure. As was noted in Chapter 2, there has been a stabilisation of inter district 'lifetime' migration within the rural areas, and it is not surprising that in each study area a small number of rural migrants was recorded.

It is apparent from Table 4.3 that only 10 percent of all circular migrants moved to rural destinations. The rate varies from 9 percent in Rampal to 17 percent in Chandina. Village markets and the thana centres, attracted almost two-thirds of the rural migrants. The remaining one-third moved to different rural places and service centres.

It appears likely that a significant proportion of rural to rural migration, especially moves oriented towards the big markets and/or important thana centres, will be regarded as rural to urban (or semi-urban) movement in the near future. Many thana centres and rural markets with electricity and a few other urban

facilities have been redefined as urban localities by the recent census (Census 1981, p.36). If one uses the latest census reclassification of urban places, the number of rural to rural migrations is reduced further by a considerable degree.

Rural-urban circular migration

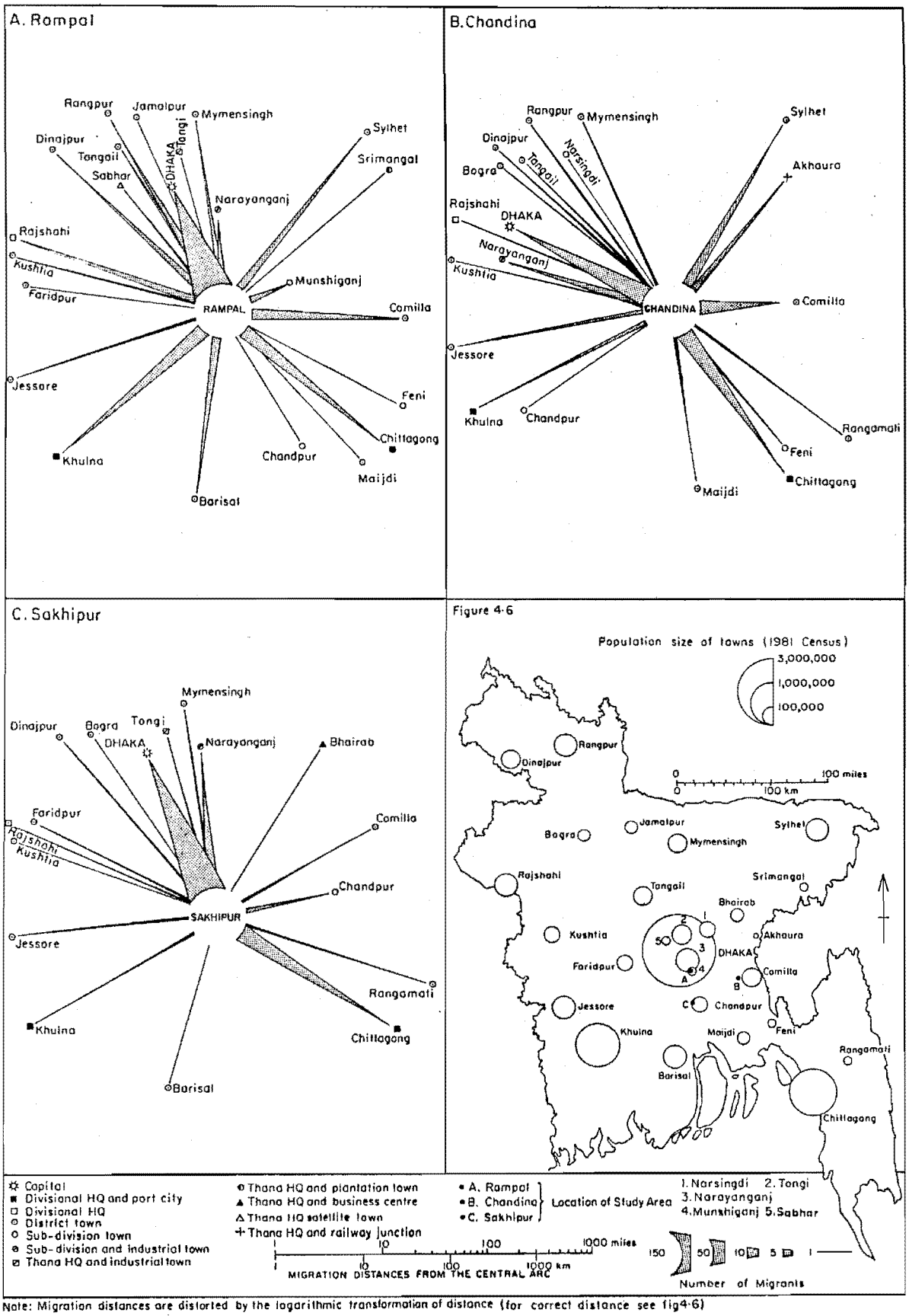
As already indicated, circular migration from rural areas in Bangladesh is essentially a rural-urban movement, undertaken mainly by the non-farm population (Figure 6.6). In the three study locations 90 percent of the migrants were found to move towards cities and towns, and this ratio varied from the 91 percent in Rampal to 90 percent in Sakhipur and to 83 percent in Chandina. Dhaka city alone has attracted nearly half (43 percent) of the total rural-urban migrants. The other important urban destinations are Chittagong, Narayangonj, Comilla and Khulna cities (Figure 4.5). In combination, these major town (including Dhaka) have attracted two-thirds of the migrants.

The magnitude of attraction of a town is more likely to depend on its population size and structure of functions (Figures 4.6 and 4.5) than any simple distance-decay function. On the other hand, the migration field of a region depends mainly upon the characteristics of the migrants (Chapter 6) and external transport linkages of that region.

The destination patterns of the migrants varied

Figure 4·5 FLOWS OF CIRCULAR MIGRATION FROM RAMPAL, CHANDINA AND SAKHIPUR TO DIFFERENT TOWNS, 1981

Figure 4·6 SIZE AND LOCATION OF TOWNS



Note: Migration distances are distorted by the logarithmic transformation of distance (for correct distance see fig4·6)

further with respect to the distance of migration. It is evident that numbers of long-distance migrants from the three study areas in general, and from Sakhipur region in particular, are very small. One obvious reason for such a pattern is the relative location of these three areas. As shown in Figure 4.6, the areas are located near the centre of the country and are not far from the country's three major metropolitan cities namely Dhaka, Chittagong, and Khulna. In Sakhipur, poor transport is also partly responsible for the region's low incidence of long-distance circular migration.

It is evident that the migrants who live far away from their places of origin are more likely to have a permanent type of salaried job in public and private sectors. Temporary employees, wage earners, and low-income self-employed migrants very often cannot afford to bear long-distance transport costs, and thus they always look for employment at relatively short distances from their village homes. The characteristics of migrants are discussed in greater depth in Chapter 6.

4.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the major patterns of commuting and circular migration originating in the three study areas. It is evident that the patterns and processes of commuting of a rural region are strongly tied up with the region's agricultural patterns and the

spatial organization of its neighbouring rural markets, thana centres, and towns. Circular migration from rural regions is now mostly oriented towards towns, and thus the movement patterns of the migrants are firmly influenced by the country's level and pattern of urbanization.

The major features of the space-time patterns of commuting and circular migration can be summarized as follows:

1. The proportion of commuters in the population varies significantly from one area to another. The difference is mostly related to the agricultural system in the area, and the accessibility of places in the region to local and more distant towns. In the case of circular migration there was much less variation between areas in the incidence of movement. This is mainly due to a reduction in intra-rural migration opportunities with rising population densities and the deteriorating economic position of most rural residents.

2. Most commuter trips by village people are oriented towards neighbouring rural destinations. Nevertheless, this pattern has been changing in almost all rural areas in Bangladesh, and in those villages which are close to the big urban centres (such as villages in Rampal area), rural-urban commuting has become or is becoming more important than the rural to rural stream. In the case of non-seasonal circular migration, the great majority of moves are directed

towards urban areas.

3. Distance acts as a definite deterrent to commuting in most situations. In Bangladesh the elasticity of distance with relation to volume of commuting indicates that the village commuters generally travel a very short distance (Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1). This may be the result of several factors, such as the poor condition of transport systems, compactness of rural settlements, and the villagers' resulting greater dependence on walking. The relationship between distance and volume of circular migration is less obvious in the three study areas. This is partly a function of the locaion of these areas in relation to several of the nation's major urban centres. Long-distance circular migration was less common from areas with comparatively poor transport infrastructure.

4. Generally, the intensive cultivation of marketable products and easy access to different markets accelerates the commuting rate of rural people, especially those who are associated with farming and/or trading of farm products. It is also evident that improvement in agriculture through use of HYV is discouraging long-term (e.g. seasonal migration) to farmers and farm workers in Rampal and Chandina; whereas the low intensity of agricuture in the Sakhipur region is promoting seasonal migration. Thus, it can be said that in an agrarian country like Bangladesh, where the vast majority of villagers still depend on

agriculture for a livelihood, the high rate of commuting of rural people is positively correlated with the intensity of agricultural activities.

CHAPTER 5

COMMUTING TRIPS : A CASE STUDY

In this chapter the daily journeys of commuters in different occupation groups are examined using information collected from a sample of villagers in the Rampal study area. Data were recorded using the prospective mobility registration technique (Table 1.1, stage 3) pioneered in some recent studies of internal population movement in Southeast Asia and Melanesia (Chapman 1970; Mantra 1981; Singhanetra-Renard 1981).

Over a 12 months registration period from June 1981 to May 1982, 8651 commuting trips were recorded for 40 men selected randomly from commuters of different occupational groups (Table 5.1). Each trip involved two moves - travel to place(s) of work and the return home. As has been noted previously, in the context of rural settings in Bangladesh, a trip is recorded when a person moves to his workplace(s) which is/are located at a minimum distance of two miles from the commuter's village residence. Two aspects of commuting are examined here: the seasonal rhythm of movement and the distances travelled by people in the different occupation categories.

5.1 SEASONAL PATTERN OF COMMUTING

Figure 5.1 shows temporal variations in commuting trips for different occupation groups. Among the daily

Table 5.1

Rampal Commuters: Nature of Occupation at Destination, 1981

Occupation	No. of Sample	Additional Notes
Daily Kachamal traders	12	Mainly vegetable traders
Bi-weekly Kachamal traders	4	Trade vegetables and summer fruits
Milkmen	4	Supply milk from Rampal to Dhaka City
Non-agricultural wage earners	12	8 Porters, 3 factory workers, 1 rickshaw puller
Civil servants	6	Various Government service
Others	2	1 garments supplier 1 restaurant owner
Total	40	

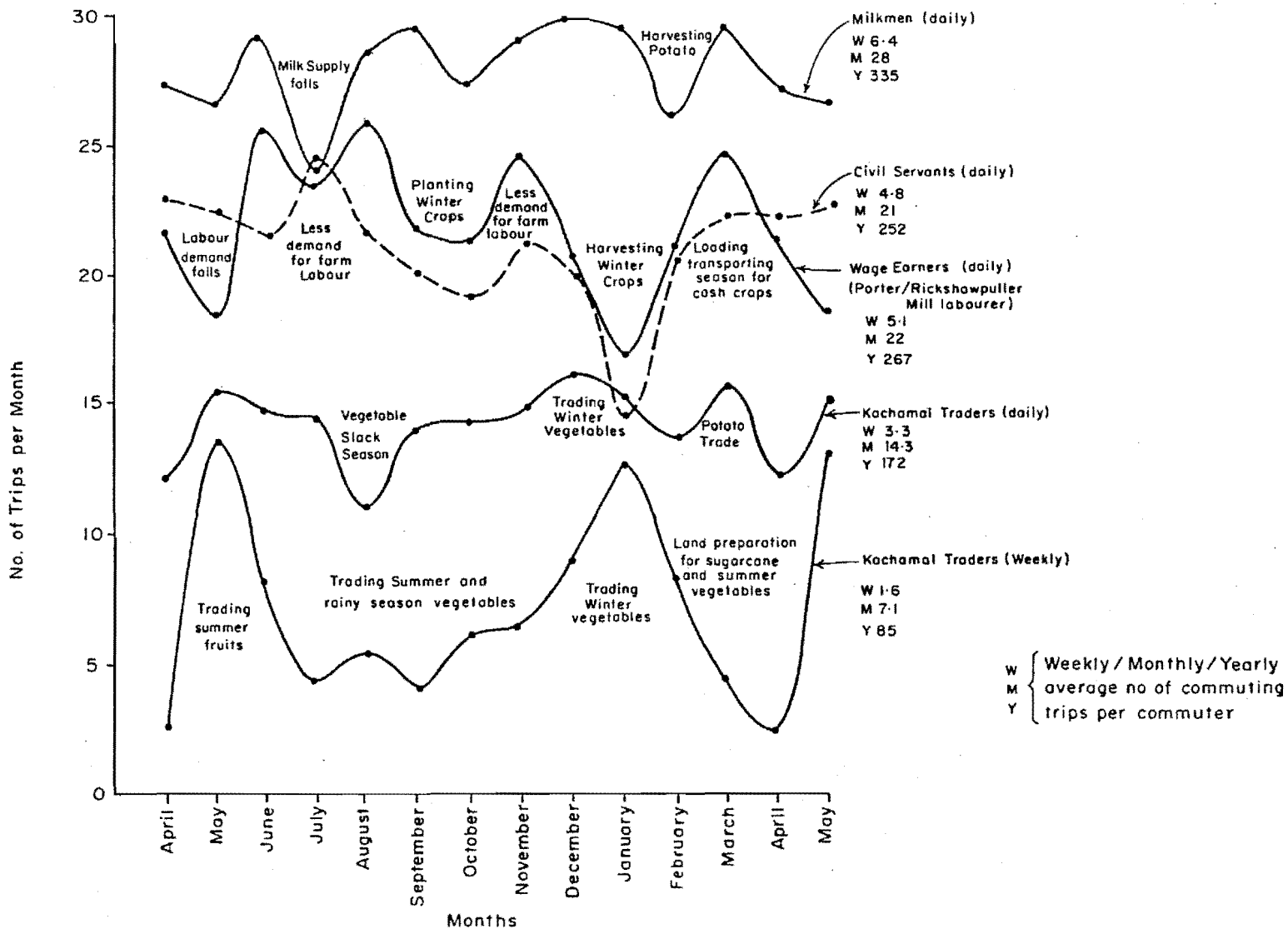
commuters, milkmen move about most frequently. Their average frequency of commuting trips per week, per month, and over the study year - are 6.4, 28 and 335 respectively. Wage earners, civil servants and Kachamal traders rank second, third and fourth in terms of frequency of commuting. In brief, the frequency of commuting is largely influenced by occupation, distance of destination(s), availability of work (at destination) and the commuter's degree of seasonal involvement with agricultural activities at the home village. The patterns for different occupation groups are discussed below.

5.1.1 Milkmen

Daily commuters

Milkmen usually supply milk from Rampal to Dhaka and Narayangonj urban markets. Every day they either collect milk from farmers' homes or buy from local markets, and sell it in these urban centres. They commute either in the morning or evening, but most operate a morning shift. Most of those who commute in the morning leave their residence early and return before evening (Figure 5.2d). On return, some of them work on their farms often until it is dark. Evening shift milkmen spend their mornings in agricultural work. They mostly return before midnight, although sometimes it is necessary to stay overnight at their destination given weather conditions and the absence of return transport.

Figure 5·1
SEASONAL PATTERN OF COMMUTING TRIPS BY OCCUPATION GROUPS, RAMPAL
(June 1981 – May 1982)



Almost all milkmen commute by rickshaw up to Katpatti from where they go to Dhaka and Narayangonj by launch. On return, most of them walk home from Katpatti. These routine daily movements are less frequent during July and February (Figure 5.1). Around July, milk supply falls considerably due to a shortage of fodder in the rainy season. In late winter (in February), the reason for a decline in the incidence of commuting trips is related to the labour demands of the potato harvest in this region. During this time most men spend some days every week harvesting their own cash crop (potato) or locally exchanging labour to do so.

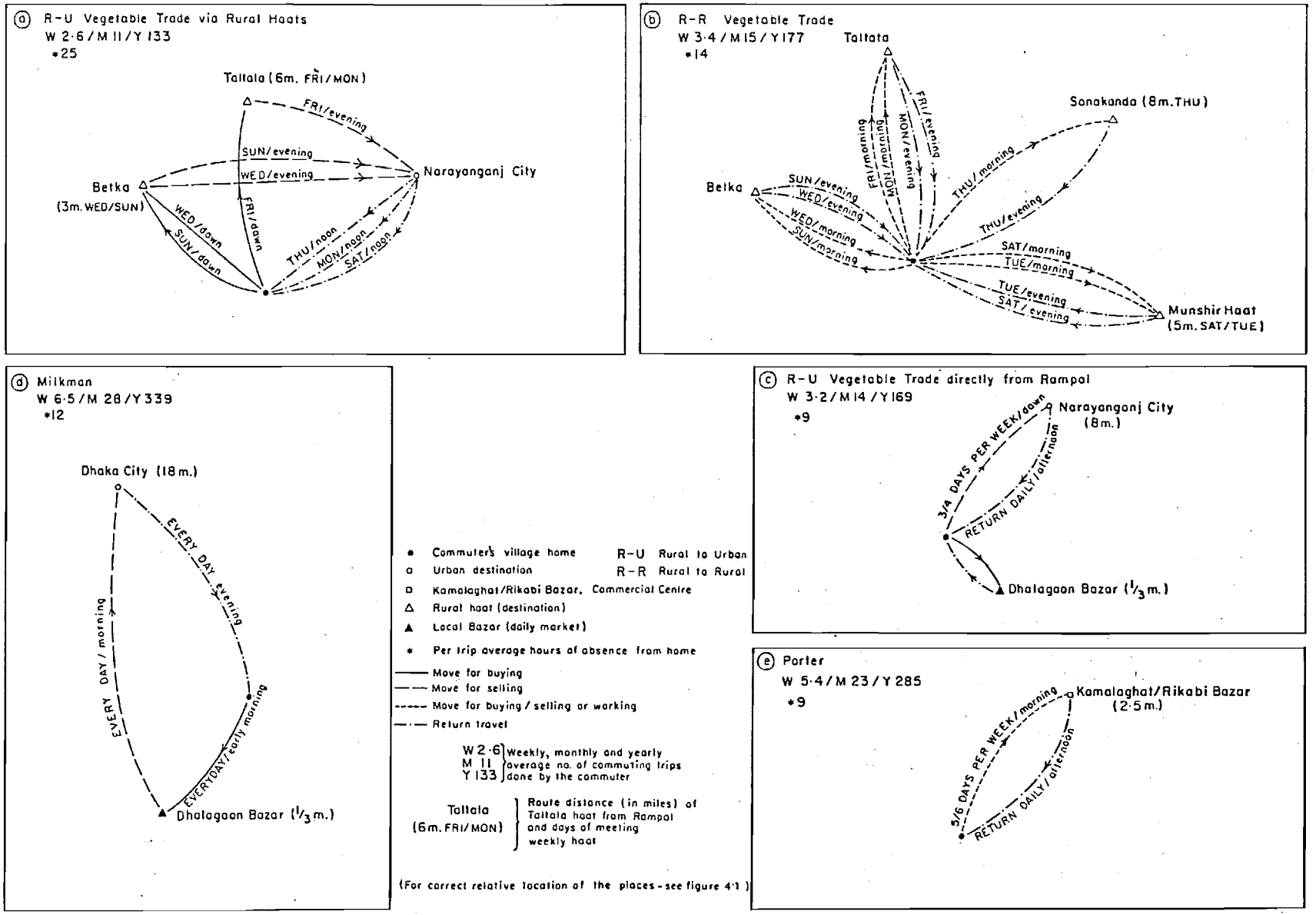
5.1.2 Wage earners

Major destination

Non-agricultural wage earners include porters, rickshaw pullers, and mill labourers. Most porters and mill workers travel for work to the evolving commercial, industrial and urban belt which in fact, starts from Betka, continues down to the right bank of Ichamati/Dhaleswari rivers and ends at Munshigonj town (Figure 1.1). The main focus of this area is Kamalaghat-Rikabi Bazar business centre. In brief, Kamalaghat has been developing rapidly as the most important inland entrepot particularly for agricultural products. Other important clusters within this commercial belt, are Betka, Mirkadim, Binatpur and Moktarpur. Large numbers of small industries (mainly

Figure 5·2

TYPICAL PATTERNS OF COMMUTING TRIPS OF SOME COMMUTERS FROM RAMPAL, BANGLADESH 1981



cold storages and rice processing mills) and godowns (warehouses) have already been established there.

Every day hundreds of wage labourers from Rampal and its neighbouring areas commute to this urban-industrial agglomeration for casual employment. Data from the mobility register show that over 75 percent of off-farm day labourers from Rampal usually commute to that workplace. The main flow of rickshaw pullers who transport passengers and goods also follows the same direction of daily movement. Figure 5.2e illustrates the travelling pattern of a porter (kuli) who commutes every day directly from his home to Kamalaghat-Rikabi Bazar commercial centre for carrying loads.

Seasonal rhythm

Throughout the year, Rampal wage earners commute to Kamalaghat-Rikabi Bazar. However, data from the mobility register shows that the frequency of commuting varies from month to month and season to season in response to the agricultural cycle (in Rampal) and the fluctuations of labour demand in that business centre. The monthly frequency of commuting trips for wage earners, varies from 17 to 26. The frequency of movement decreases in May, September to October, and falls markedly in winter (Figure 5.1). In May, when the potato storing season ends (Figure 3.3), more than 40 cold stores along the Ichamati/Dhaleswari bank have very little demand for labour and this diminishes the rate of commuting of wage earners from Rampal. With the start

of the potato unloading season in August, labour demand in these stores rises again. But during August to October, Rampal also needs a large agricultural labour force to plant potatoes and other winter vegetables. So, labourers intentionally refrain from commuting for a few days and spend time working on their own farms or acting as labourers for other farmers (Table 5.2).

The marked decline in commuting rates in winter corresponds to a heavy demand for local harvesting labour as well as a lean period for non-agricultural wage labour in the Kamalaghat-Rikabi Bazar business centre. Winter is the good season for Rampalese. During this season every household directly or indirectly earns a considerable amount of cash by harvesting winter vegetables which they grow mainly for the big Dhaka/Narayangonj urban market. Very often they get a bumper crop due to settled weather in winter. Agricultural labourers get better wages and more regular employment in the local area, and they have less incentive to commute for wages in town.

Demand and supply

The rate of commuting begins to rise sharply in late winter and reaches its annual peak in early summer (in March) when all the business centres along the Ichamati/Dhaleswari river bank have a shortage of wage labourers. Workers simultaneously engage in transporting and loading potato, paddy and rabi crops in cold stores, godowns and mills. They work from sunrise to

sunset; some days even up to 9 p.m. or later. Often seasonal migrants from neighbouring districts (e.g. Faridpur, Bakerganj etc.) work together with the local wage commuters. On average, every labourer earns at least twice as much cash at this time as in any other season of the year.

The higher incidence of commuting during the rainy season as well as around November, is mainly influenced by a lower demand for local agricultural employment. During this time there is some demand for labour in Kamalaghat-Rikabi Bazar, but this is not enough to absorb the increasing number of commuters seeking wage employment. As the competition for work is high, the employers and the labour contractors have an advantage and can pay a low wage. Hence in June, July, August and November, commuting labourers tend to be under-paid and under-employed. Sometimes, commuters return home without getting any work at all in these months.

5.1.3 Civil servants

Dual occupations

Figure 5.1 clearly indicates that the rate of commuting of civil servants is inversely related to the intensity of agricultural activities. Commuting is important except during the peak agricultural seasons (such as planting and harvesting winter vegetables) when civil servants often take part in their farm work or

supervise hired labourers or both. This pattern is further verified in Section 5.1.5 where the reasons for occasionally refraining from commuting over different seasons are examined.

The seasonal pattern of mobility of those working in the formal sector (including industrial workers) can be explained by reference to the fact that in rural Bangladesh, men have two or more occupations at the same time. Excessive fragmentation of land holdings and shortage of agricultural employment have forced the village people to take off-farm jobs which provide part of their total subsistence income. An empirical study by Ali (1980, 29, See Appendix 2), for instance, found that 84 percent of farm families in Bangladesh had a member employed in off-farm work at least for some time in 1980. This is a substantial increase in off-farm work since 1950.

Absenteeism

Generally, villagers obtain non-farm work through commuting or circular migration. When the demand for on-farm labour is high mobility rates decrease to a low level. Recently the rate of absenteeism among workers in Jute industries (the largest industry in Bangladesh) has been at levels of 20 to 30 percent per month (Shafique 1983, 23). The highest rate of absence (35 percent) occurs at the times of the annual planting and harvesting seasons. An absence of female participation in outdoor farm work also indirectly affects the rate of

mobility among males as they have to manage simultaneously activities on the land as well as in non-local off-farm jobs.

Mantra's (1981, 91) study in Indonesia reached different conclusions regarding the seasonal pattern of commuting of civil servants as well as contract labourers. He found that farm activities do not affect the mobility patterns of these groups. He reached this conclusion from eight months registration of mobility records. However, the study did not explain those commuters' tenural status, involvement in farm work particularly during peak season(s), and seasonal use of unofficial leave. One reason for the difference might be that in Indonesia (unlike Bangladesh) females participate more in outdoor farm work and, as a result, their male partners are able to keep on commuting even during the busy period in their farms.

5.1.4 Kachamal traders

The vegetable season

Kachamal traders are the largest group among the commuters from Rampal (Figure 4.2). Their pattern of mobility is strongly related to the intensive and extensive cultivation of vegetables in the Rampal region. The rates of commuting daily and weekly, of Kachamal traders are shown in Figure 5.1. The frequency of trips per month of the daily traders ranges between 11 to 16. For weekly traders, the frequency varies

greatly from 3 to 13 trips per month. The highest rate of movement comes twice per year for both groups - firstly at the time of harvesting winter vegetables in and around Rampal and secondly during summer when fruit is picked in Rampal as well as in Dhaka, Mymensingh, Rajshahi and Dinajpur districts (Figure 3.3).

Rampal has no true slack season for market gardening. The major harvest is in winter when vegetables grown commercially over the whole Munshigonj market gardening area are mature (Section 3.1.3). During this time the whole region's population focuses on activities related to the harvest and trade of winter vegetables. The flock of commuters related to the vegetable trade comprises retailers, wholesalers, dealers, middlemen and vegetable growers. As the winter progresses, the volume and rate of commuting increases. In the next few paragraphs movements of vegetable traders are described in some detail.

The urban vegetable trade

The vegetable trader's commuting pattern is ubiquitous and synchronized with weekly market cycles in the rural areas and daily vegetable marketing times in the nearby urban centres particularly in Dhaka/ Narayangonj city. The pattern is further complicated by the range of vegetable business types (such as retailer, wholesaler, dealer and middlemen) as well as by the range of destinations open to traders for business. Figure 5.2 illustrates this more clearly.

The pattern of trips for rural to urban trading is quite different from that of the intra-rural commuting of vegetable traders. Traders usually move to urban centres to sell their vegetables which they buy either from the local bazar (daily market) or from neighbouring haats (rural weekly market). Urban commuters make their trips via different rural markets (Figure 5.2a, c).

Urban vegetable markets open in the morning and traders, particularly the retailers, reach there well before the peak hours of business. Retailers who commute to town directly from Rampal start their travel before sunrise (Figure 5.2c). They buy the goods during the previous day from the local market (such as Dhalagaon Bazar) or from the grower's garden and bring them to their home. Here, at night, they along with their family members, spend a few hours arranging the vegetables (i.e. cleaning, sorting, bunching) for selling. Non-retail traders (such as wholesalers, dealers, middlemen etc.) travel mostly during the daytime and sell their goods to urban wholesale markets which remain open from dawn to dusk.

Rural to urban commuting via neighbouring haats (Figure 5.2a), has a different spatial pattern. In this case, a commuter first moves to a particular site on haat day (market day). Usually the haats meet on a fixed schedule, two afternoons per week. There the commuter buys vegetables directly from the growers and, after buying, he is accompanied by other fellow

vegetable traders who carry their goods (by boat or launch) to the urban market where they wait until the following morning to retail their goods. At night they arrange their vegetables and sleep in the market. In the morning, as soon as they sell their goods, the commuters quickly return home and spend the afternoon mostly working in the fields. Figure 5.2a illustrates a weekly routine of three complete trips which involve six days. The remaining day of the week is set aside for a rest.

The rural vegetable trade

Vegetable traders who commute within rural areas have a different pattern of movement which is illustrated in Figure 5.2b. This group mainly includes vegetable retailers and middlemen. Every morning they commute directly from their home to different rural haats and come back the same evening. Choice of haat depends mostly on the weekly cycle of rural markets as well as distance and size of a particular haat. In fact, most of the village peddlars in Bangladesh travel following the pattern as shown in Figure 5.2b.

Summer fruits

The mobility rate of Kachamal traders' rises again in summer particularly when summer fruits such as mango, jack fruit, liches etc. are available in the market. Summer fruits are in high demand throughout the whole country. In certain areas of the country (such

as Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Dhaka and Mymensingh districts) they are grown commercially. A large number of Kachamal traders are thus involved in the fruit business in the summer season. As Rampal had long been famous (section 3.1.3) for growing certain tree crops (mainly bananas), people of this particular area traditionally achieved the necessary skills for trading fruits. Recently fruit-growing in Rampal has become less important mainly due to strong competition for land and labour from vegetable gardening. Hence, during summer, Rampal fruit traders commute over a wide range of distances from their home to buy summer fruits which they usually retail at Dhaka/Narayangonj cities as well as neighbouring village markets.

5.1.5 Total pattern

Commuting and the agricultural cycle

In the preceding sections the seasonal pattern of commuting of each occupation group was explained in detail. It will be shown in this section that their total pattern of commuting is also largely influenced by the major agro-climatic seasons in and around Rampal. During mobility registration in Rampal it was often reported that the commuters occasionally refrain from commuting for some days particularly when they could work in the fields. Field registrars were advised to take note of those days together with the reason(s) for not being able to commute.

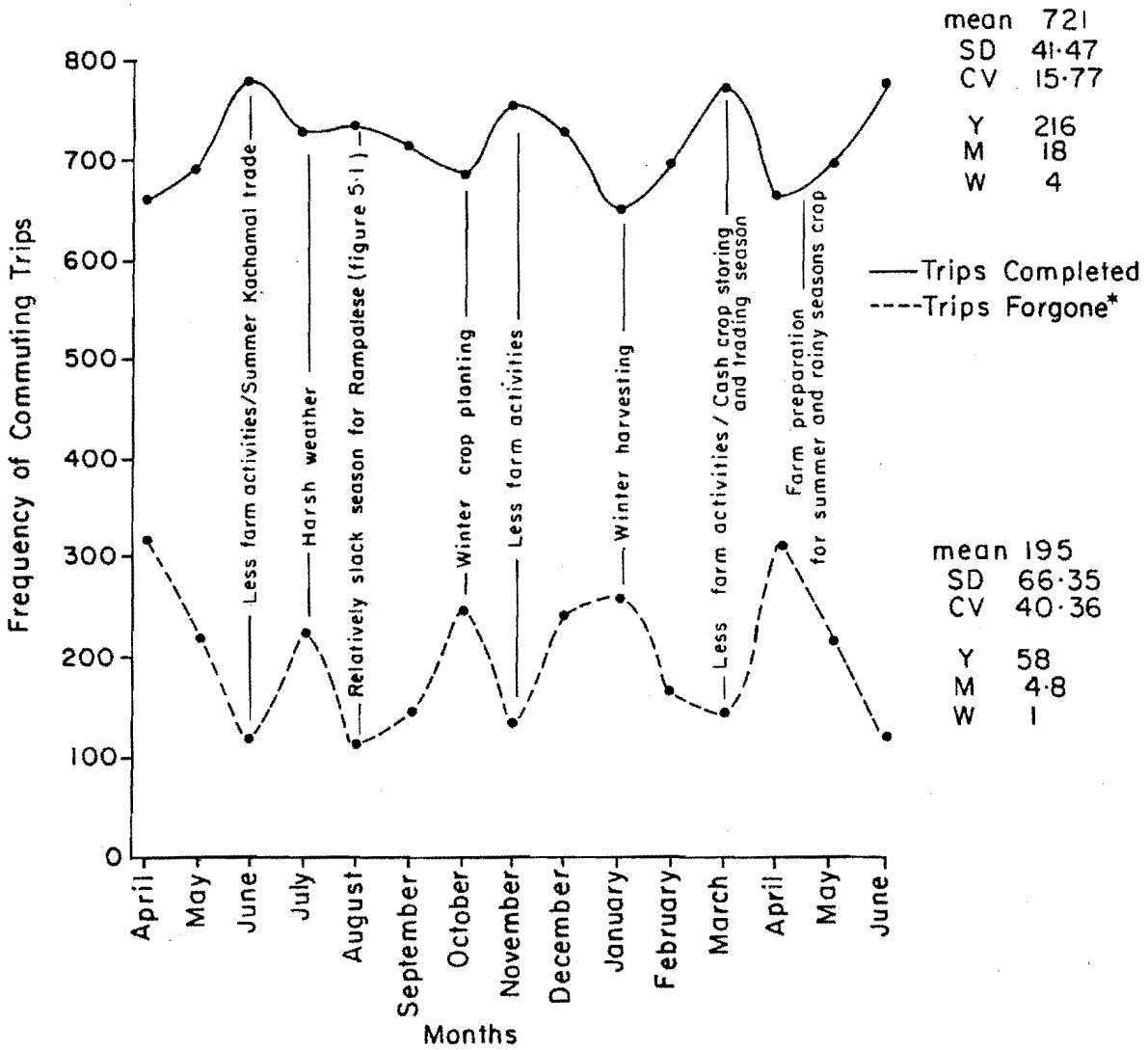
The main idea was to clarify the impact of the agricultural cycle on mobility, an issue that has been mentioned but not illustrated clearly in many studies of population movement in the Third World. The monthly distribution of commuting trips completed or intentionally forgone because of demands at home by all sample commuters from Rampal is shown in Figure 5.3. Here it is revealed that the rates of commuting and abstaining from commuting fluctuated significantly on a seasonal basis.

In the streets of Rampal, commuters are visible throughout the whole year, but the heaviest rates of commuting are recorded around March, June and November (Figure 5.3) when a decline in the demand for agricultural labour (in Rampal) encourages villagers to move regularly for a livelihood. The rate also increases as a result of certain "pull" factors (such as the cycle of Kachamal trade and the crop storing season) which mainly attract the Kachamal traders and day labourers from Rampal.

Following the agricultural cycle in Rampal, the rate falls during the middle of winter and early summer when Rampal needs a large number of extra hands to harvest winter crops and prepare farms for summer and rainy season crops respectively (Figure 3.3). Except for the Kachamal traders, all commuters had their lowest rate of movement away from the village for work during the winter harvesting season (Figure 5.1). The

Figure 5·3

MONTHLY DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUTING TRIPS - COMPLETED OR FORGONE BY A SAMPLE OF COMMUTERS FROM RAMPAL



* Trips intentionly forgone for reasons other than weekly rest and holidays

incidence of commuting also drops substantially during early winter (around October), the time for planting winter crops. The rainy season has a moderate effect on the commuting pattern. At this time of the year, harsh weather (mostly torrential rain) and a shortage of employment at the destination places, discourages regular movements by commuters.

Seasonal fluctuations in commuting rates result in a pattern characterised by a series of waves in which every crest or trough relates to a particular agro-climatic cycle. Usually the troughs are related to busy periods (planting/ harvesting) in the agricultural cycle and the crests to slack seasons within the cycle (Figure 5.3). The pattern of abstaining from commuting, shown in Figure 5.3, also reveals clear seasonal fluctuations, but in this case the troughs and crests are obviously related to slack seasons and busy seasons respectively.

The decision not to commute

Tables 5.2 and 5.3 show the reasons for refraining from commuting by occupation group and month respectively. Farm work (i.e. to participate in or to supervise local farm activities) was found to be the single most important reason (approximately 60 percent of the reasons cited) mentioned by commuters from all occupational groups. Forgoing commuting journeys because of the need to manage grehasti (farm work) is especially prevalent during April-May (the time of

Table 5.2

Reasons for Commuters Forgoing Trips, by Occupation Group[1]

(percentages)

Reasons	Kachamal traders	Milkmen	Non-farm day labourers	Mill Labourers	Civil Servants	Total	N
Managing grehasti	59	31	13	63	13	35	693
Availability of local work	3	-	42	-	-	19	377
Sickness	13	9	21	1	12	15	306
Engaged in ceremonies/funerals	6	21	5	6	19	7	144
Irregular rest from hard work	3	7	6	4	-	5	91
Took casual leave[2]	-	-	-	6	47	5	91
Shortage of capital	12	15	-	-	-	5	101
Harsh weather	1	5	8	-	3	4	79
Shortage of or irregular work at destination	-	-	3	6	-	2	36
Others	3	11	3	13	6	4	86
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	
Total no. of response (N)	770	80	853	126	175	2004*	
No. of study commuters	16	4	9	3	6	38	

1 Excluding regular rest from commuting work and office holidays.
2 Leave taken by the commuters for a variety of personal reasons.

- Nil or negligible response
* Responses from 38 commuters

planting summer and rainy season crops), around October (when winter crops are planted), and in December-January (during the winter harvest).

Following the same pattern day labourers who are mostly landless or near landless forgo commuting trips when local farm work is readily available. Civil servants avoid some commuting trips (on working days) mostly during the agricultural seasons when they can spend their casual leave supervising their own farm. Very often they take this leave stating false personal or family health reasons.

Sickness and shortage of cash

Sickness of commuters or their family members is another common reason for forgoing a trip. This is more common among the day labourers as they work hard and are unable to obtain sufficient food regularly. During the rainy season they often suffer from cold and fever due to frequent outdoor work in wet conditions.

The number of commuting trips made by traders and milkmen drop substantially when they fall short of money (business capital) which may happen at any time of the year depending on the size and nature of business, agricultural investment, commitments to his dependents and relatives, and above all his economic condition. In October-November, small peddlars spend most of their business capital on growing winter cash crops and hence they cannot commute regularly because of a shortfall of cash. Other notable reasons which detract from regular

Table 5.3

Monthly Distribution of Major Reasons for Commuters' Forgoing Trips

(percentage)

Months	Look after grehasti	Availability of local work	Took Casual leave	Harsh Weather	All other reasons	Total	N
January	10	18	28	-	8	11	263
February	6	9	2	-	9	7	171
March	8	7	10	3	5	7	159
April	18	12	6	4	11	13	315
May	13	12	1	1	6	9	215
June	3	-	-	4	9	5	114
July	2	1	5	55	17	9	222
August	2	1	-	17	8	5	110
September	6	5	15	9	6	6	149
October	14	8	6	-	11	11	254
November	7	6	-	-	5	5	127
December	10	20	27	6	4	10	244
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	
N	878	400	99	77	889		2343*

- Nil or negligible response
* Responses by 40 commuters

movement are ceremonial engagements, unscheduled breaks from hard work and harsh weather particularly during July-August (Table 5.3).

A wider context

The seasonal influence of agricultural activity upon the practice of commuting by village communities in the Third World countries is not yet well understood. This is mainly because there is a lack of detailed prospective inquiries into the mechanism of commuting. The work of Mantra (1981) and Hugo (1978a) in Indonesia has made useful contributions. While both researchers selected their study villages from Java they arrived at different conclusions. Based on eight months of prospective surveys, Mantra (1981, 91-93) concluded that, except for contract workers, there was great variation in commuting rates by season for all commuters.

Hugo (1978a, 130) argued that: 'A significant feature of commuting ... common to all the villages is the absence of major fluctuations between seasons in rates of commuting'. He also mentioned that commuters occasionally forgo trips particularly during peak seasons such as planting and harvesting. In brief, Hugo was limited by his own field strategy where he avoided prospective surveys which have the advantages of giving accurate low data on the incidence of commuting on a monthly or seasonal basis (Figure 5.3). He has touched upon the phenomenon of commuting but did not examine the

rates of movement directly by counting the number of moves/trips over a season, month or year from his study village(s).

Mantra counted every commuting movement within his eight months registration period and recognized the seasonal influence on commuting rates. Some relevant comments on Mantra's findings in relation to the Rampal study are presented in section 5.1.3. However, Mantra did not inquire further into whether and why regular commuters sometimes chose not to make trips, particularly on working days.

5.2 DURATION, DESTINATION AND MODE OF TRAVEL

A comprehensive description of the space-time pattern of commuting trips from the three study areas is presented in Chapter 4. This section examines the movements of a sample of commuters from Rampal in terms of the durations, destinations and modes of travel of their trips during 1981-82.

5.2.1 Length of absence

The length of trip undertaken by Rampal's commuters varies from a few hours to more than a week. Some details of trip duration by the commuter's occupation are given in Table 5.4. It appears from the table that the length of absence from home varies with occupation. For example, the average length of absence for trading Kachamal is 18 hours per trip as against 11 hours required by the non-farm day labourers for wage

Table 5.4

Duration of Commuting Trips by Occupation

Duration (in hours)	Kachamal Traders			Milkmen	Non-farm day Labourers	Industrial workers	Civil Servants	All Commuters
	Vegetables	Fruits*	Vegts & Fruits					
up to 4	1	-	1	-	2	-	1	1
5 - 8	21	25	21	8	26	3	23	19
9 - 12	41	18	40	41	44	77	58	48
13 - 18	10	4	10	45	28	19	14	22
19 - 24	4	-	4	6	-	-	-	2
25 - 30	20	-	19	-	-	1	1	6
31 - 36	2	-	2	-	-	-	2	1
37+	1	53	2	-	-	-	2	1
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Total trips	2285	92	2377	1342	2379	871	1528	8497
Sample Commuters	16	*	16	4	9	3	6	38
Median	11	61	11	13	11	11	10	11
Mean	14.60	97.58	18.30	13.06	10.83	11.56	11.58	13.44
SD	8.35	109.82	30.14	3.68	5.34	2.42	8.12	16.74
CU	57.23	112.55	164.74	28.22	49.29	20.96	70.12	124.64
Range (hours)	3-59	7-324	3-324	3-24	2-114	4-26	3-96	2-324

- No or negligible response.
* Only 4 or 5 Kachamal traders (out of 16) change their vegetable trades into fruits particularly during summer season each year.

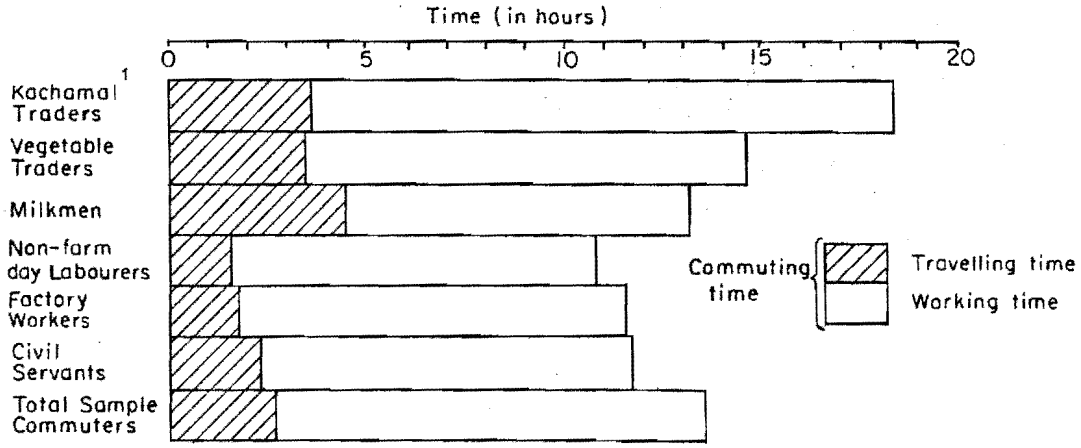
earning. On average, the milkmen usually spend 13 hours commuting daily between Rampal and Dhaka city. In the formal sector, two groups of employees, namely civil servants and industrial workers, took almost the same amount of time (around 12 hours on average) for their daily trips from home. These differences in duration of absence from home are mainly the result of occupation, distance of destination(s) and mode of transport.

Kachamal traders

Among the Kachamal traders, the length of commuting trips varied from 3 hours to 324 hours. The main reason for this high level of variability is that some traders commute for a longer period during the summer fruit season and potato season, when commuting occurs over great distances (50 to 200 miles) from Rampal.

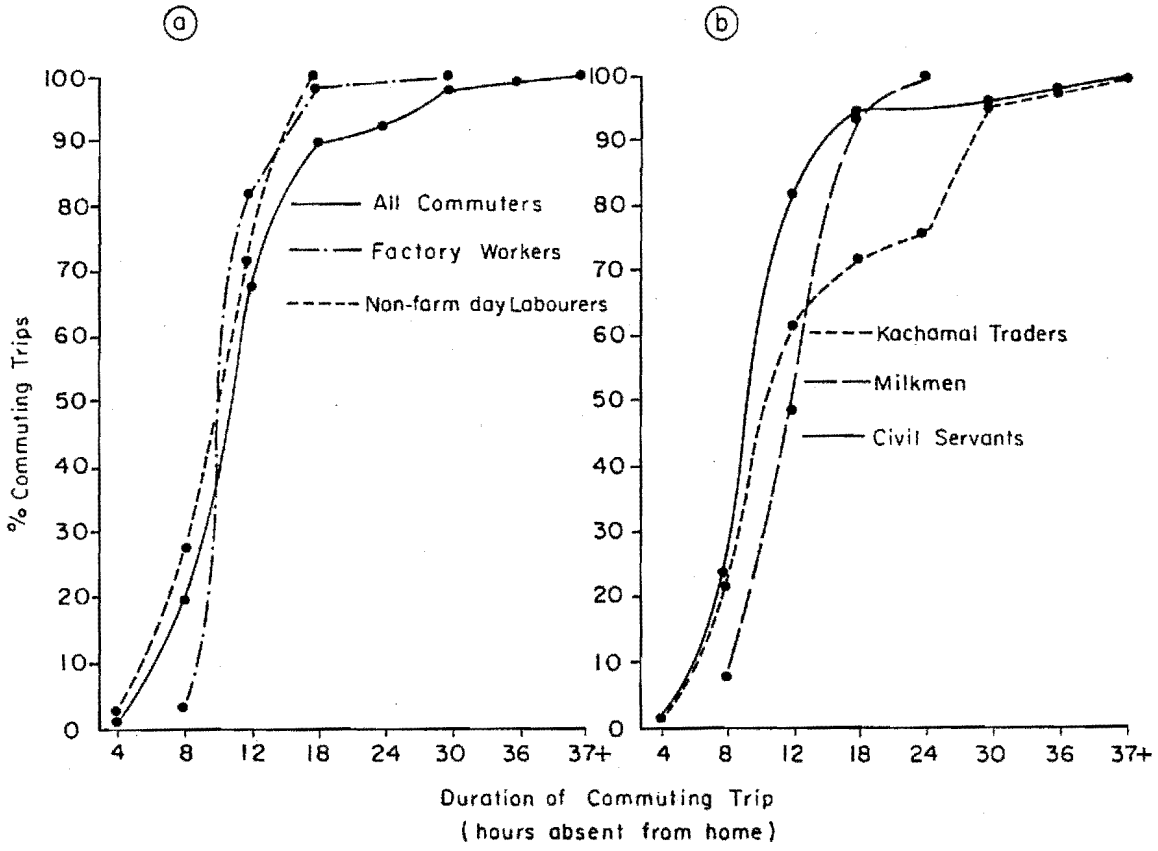
Fruit trading accounts for only four percent of the total trips done by the Kachamal traders. If these trips are excluded, the variability (cv) of commuting time for Kachamal traders drops substantially from 165 percent to 57 percent and the average time per trip also comes down to 15 hours from 18 hours (Table 5.4 and Figure 5.4). Although, on average, a Kachamal trade trip lasts a longer time, the cumulative distribution of all Kachamal trips shows that 60 percent of the trips never exceeded more than 12 hours absence from home (Figure 5.5b) and the median length of absence was found

Figure 5·4
AVERAGE TIME FOR TRAVELLING AND
WORKING BY COMMUTERS IN DIFFERENT OCCUPATION GROUPS



1. Mainly vegetable and fruit traders

Figure 5·5
CUMULATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF DURATION OF
COMMUTING TRIPS BY OCCUPATION GROUP



to be 11 hours.

Figure 5.4 shows that Kachamal traders spend more time at their destination(s) than other commuters. Because a trip for trading Kachamal involves both buying and selling of goods, the trader usually selects two destinations (one for buying vegetables/fruits and the other for selling or retailing) where he spends quite a long period for trading.

Milkmen and labourers

Milkmen ranked second in terms of average time spent on a commuting trip from Rampal. Their mean and median length of commuting trips are approximately the same - 13.06 and 13.00 hours respectively. The low variation of commuting time among the milkmen can be explained by the fact that they mostly commute to a common destination (Dhaka city) travelling by the same modes of transport. Unlike achamal traders, milkmen have short business hours as they sell their milk directly to the urban wholesale market.

Among all commuters, non-farm day labourers spend the least amount of time (average 11 hours per trip) in daily commuting from Rampal. They spend the shortest time on travel as well as day work at their destination. It is evident from Figure 5.4 that day labourers have less working time than industrial workers and civil servants. The obvious reason is that in the formal sector of employment workers have regular full-time employment, while in the informal sector the day

labourers have no guarantee of a full day's work at their destination.

5.2.2 Direction and mode of travel

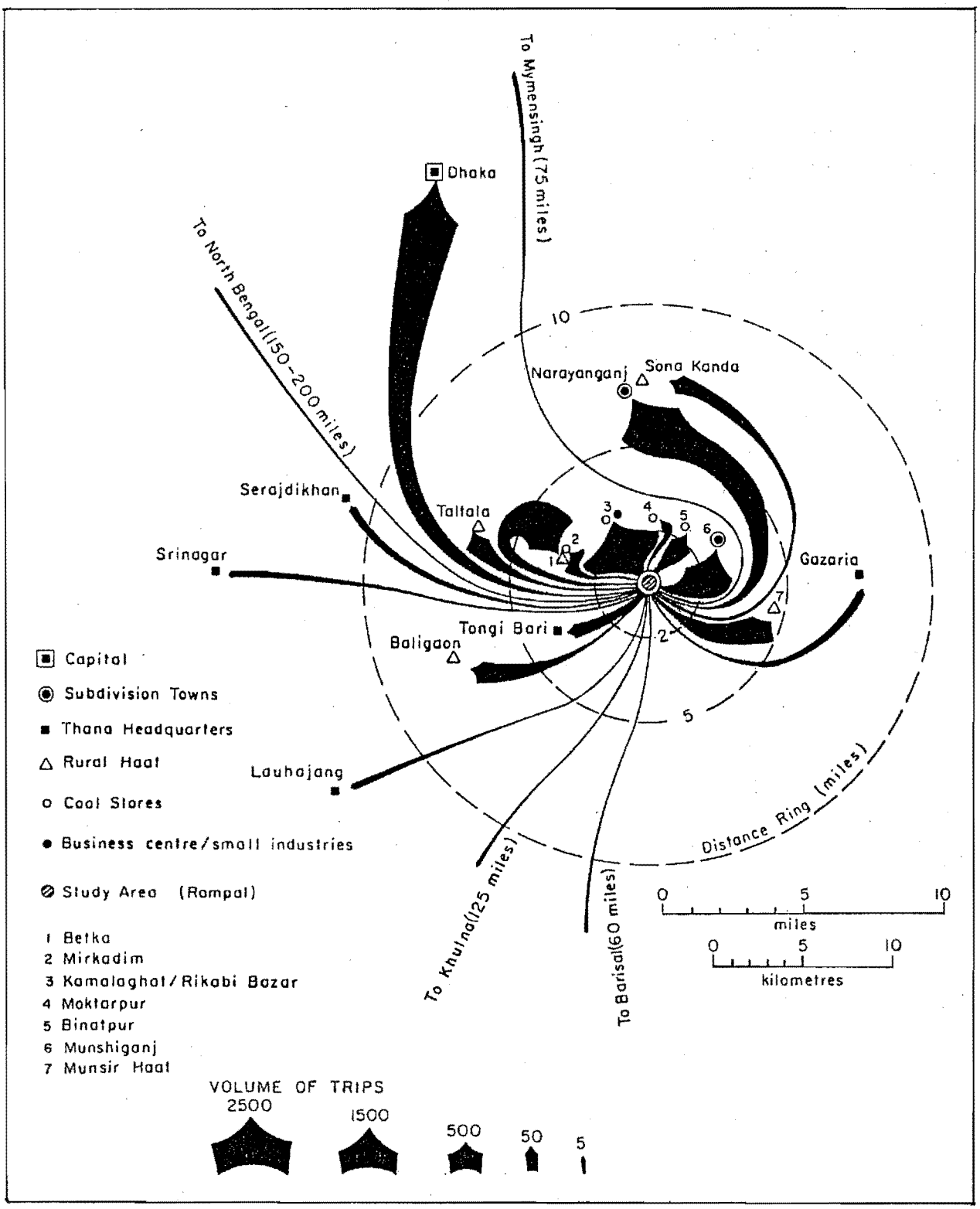
Figure 5.6 shows the volume of travel by the 40 commuters in the sample to important destinations. During the survey year they completed 8651 commuting trips by travelling 9431 times to more than 20 places at variable distances from Rampal. Generally a commuter works at one destination; but some commuters had more than one destination per single trip as shown in Figure 5.2a.

Although the commuters travelled to a number of places, three places, namely Kamalaghat-Rikabi Bazar, Narayangonj and Dhaka, received almost two-thirds of the total flows. Kamalaghat-Rikabi Bazar itself attracted nearly one-third (31 percent, Figure 5.7). Rapidly growing industrial and business centres along the Ichamati-Dhaleswari bank (Figure 1.1) attracted half of the total movements. On the other hand, Munshigonj, a sub-division town at the doorstep of Rampal, attracted only 8 percent of the total flows. The major reasons for different levels of movement to these destination places have been mentioned already in Chapter 4.

The cumulative distribution of commuting trips by distance is shown in Figure 5.7. It is apparent that more than 55 percent of all trips were confined within three miles distance from Rampal and 83 percent limited

Figure 5·6

RAMPAL COMMUTERS: VOLUME OF TRAVEL BY RURAL AND URBAN DESTINATIONS (JUNE 1981 - MAY 1982)



to seven miles. Less than 1 percent of the total number of trips involved distances in excess of 20 miles (Figures 5.6 and 5.7). The mean and median distances of commuting from Rampal were 7 and 3 miles respectively.

Modes of transport

A significant feature of commuting from Rampal is that a commuter often uses more than one mode of transport during his trip between home and work place(s). Selection of mode(s) largely depends upon factors such as geographical distance, stream of movement, nature of work, and the commuter's economic condition. Table 5.6 shows the distribution pattern of the modes of transport used by the 40 commuters for completing their 8651 trips during the survey year. Walking is by far the most common mode of transport, followed by rickshaw, launch (motorized boat) and country boat (non motorized).

Almost all commuters walked for at least a part of their regular journey during 1981-82. Personal transport such as the bicycle was used only by a very small number of office workers and mill workers. For rural commuters, the main alternative means of transport to walking was the rickshaw which had a better network than launch and boat. The urban commuters, especially Dhaka and Narayangonj bound movers, mostly depended upon the launch. At the time of the present survey, motorized road transport (such as bus, auto-rickshaw etc.) was not used within Rampal area or its

Figure 5·7
CUMULATIVE DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUTING TRIPS BY DISTANCE

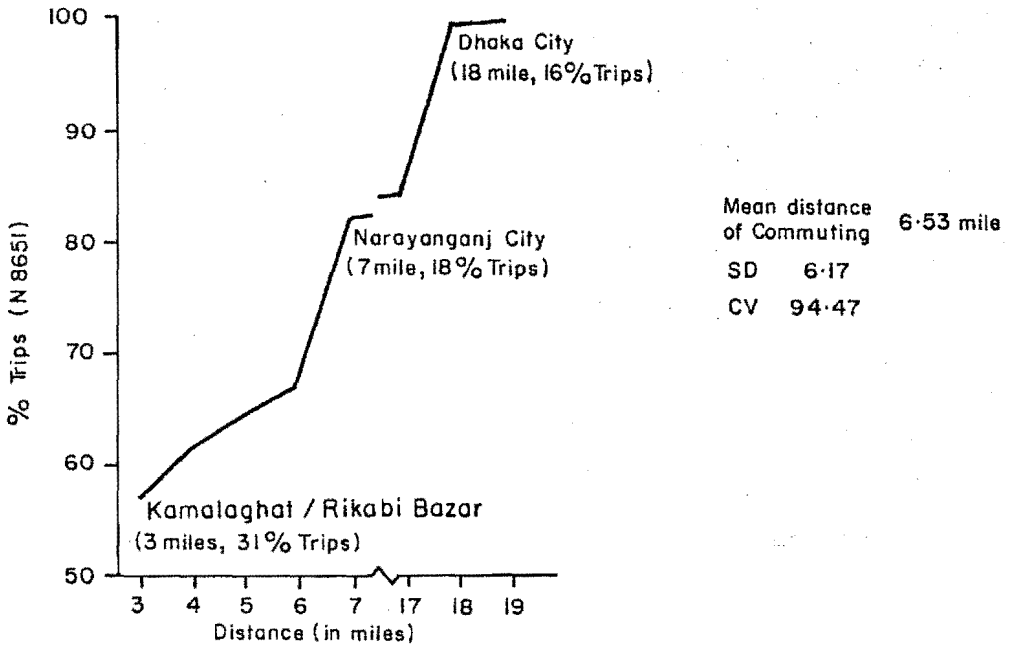


Table 5.5

Modes of Transport Used by Rampal Commuters
(June 1981 - May 1982)

Modes of Transport	Total Frequency of use *	Percent	Percent	
			Rural Destinations	Urban Destinations
Walking	6889	47	66	34
Rickshaw	3008	21	16	24
Launch	2985	20	10	28
Country Boat	1268	9	3	13
Bicycle	396	3	5	1
Bus	33	-	-	-
Total (%)		100	100	100
Total (N)	14579	14579	6160	8419

* Multiple responses are counted
- Nil or negligible

Table 5.6

Rampal Commuters: Choice of Transport
by Occupation Group

Transport	Kachamal Traders N16	Milkmen N4	Porters N8	Civil Servants N6	Others * N6
Walking	47	13	98	50	46
Rickshaw	11	42	2	30	29
Launch	20	45	-	14	1
Country Boat	22	-	-	-	6
Bicycle	-	-	-	5	18
Bus	-	-	-	1	-
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100
Total (N)	4690	2953	2082	2172	1647

* Three mill workers, one rickshaw puller, one garment supplier, one restaurant owner

- Nil or negligible

neighbouring rural regions.

5.3 SUMMARY

This chapter has examined spatial and temporal characteristics of moves by a sample of Rampal commuters over a period of 12 months. It is evident that patterns of commuting vary significantly with occupation, and are strongly influenced by agricultural cycles. Distance to destination and mode of transport are the two other important variables which influence the space-time pattern of journeys. Some of the major findings from the prospective mobility register for commuters are as follows:

1. The volume of commuting and seasonal variations in the incidence of movement depend largely on the agricultural calendar. In general, there is an inverse relationship between the intensity of farm activities and the magnitude of commuting: the greater the intensity of farm work, the smaller is the magnitude of commuting (Figure 5.3). However, among the Kachamal traders, the propensity to commute appears to be high when agricultural activities are also at a high level, especially during harvesting of winter vegetables (Figure 5.1). In the rural areas, traders who deal with agricultural products such as vegetables, fruits, cereal crops or others, are likely to move more frequently during or after the harvest period of these crops and this pattern may be found in other agrarian

societies.

2. The frequency of commuting is also found to vary with fluctuations in demand for labour in non-agricultural activities at the commuting destinations. For example, a large number of off-farm commuter jobs at Kamalaghat-Rikabi Bazar business centre are characteristically seasonal occupations, the ebb and flow of which are strongly tied up with the crop calendar of certain crops such as potato, paddy, and pulses.

3. It is also evident that there are significant variations in the frequency of commuting trips over any period of time by occupation group. These variations are caused by a number of factors such as the type of work, the commuters' levels of involvement with farm activities, distance of destination, and modes of transport used.

4. Generally, mode of transport has a strong impact on the spatial organization of commuting flows. Almost all commuters in Rampal, as elsewhere in rural Bangladesh, walk for at least a part of their journey to work. A large proportion of working people, consisting mainly of labourers, pedlars, or any other low-income group, hardly spend any money on transport. As a result a great deal of time is spent on travelling to and from work. The cost of transport (either in time for walking, or cash for other modes) deters most rural people from long-distance commuting.

5. It is evident that a number of commuting

trips from Rampal also take people away from home for lengthy periods to locations far distant from neighbouring places (Figures 5.6 and 4.1a). These long-distance commuting trips are, in fact, a kind of seasonal business tour made by a few better-off villagers who deal with big business, such as supplying potatoes from Munshigonj region to different parts of the country and fruits from northern and central districts to the capital city (Figure 3.3).

Longer distance commuting is exclusively limited to the rich minority of people in the villages. A counterpart of this pattern is the long distance seasonal migration which is mainly undertaken by the poor villagers. Before exploring the relationships between socio-economic status and mobility patterns it is necessary to establish the demographic, social and economic characteristics of movers, especially the commuters and circular migrants. This is the subject matter of the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 6

CHARACTERISTICS OF COMMUTERS AND CIRCULAR MIGRANTS

Socio-economic characteristics of commuters and circular migrants can be examined at several levels: the individual mover, the household, the groups within a community that are more or less mobile. In this and the following two chapters each of these levels is explored in turn. Selected characteristics of individual movers - their ages, education levels and occupations - are described in the first two sections. Their stated reasons for commuting or being circular migrants are discussed in the final section. Household attributes, such as size and composition, land ownership patterns, tenural status, income and economic conditions are examined in Chapter 7.

6.1 AGE AND EDUCATION

6.1.1 Age composition

The major differences in the age composition of commuters, migrants and non-movers are readily apparent in Figure 6.1. Commuters tend to be either young, middle aged or old villagers. Migrants are largely concentrated in the young adult ages, while nonmovers mostly comprise people from the dependent ages (children under the age of 15 and people over 60 years). The age specific rates of mobility and immobility as shown in Figure 6.2 and Appendix 5, depict these demographic

patterns more clearly.

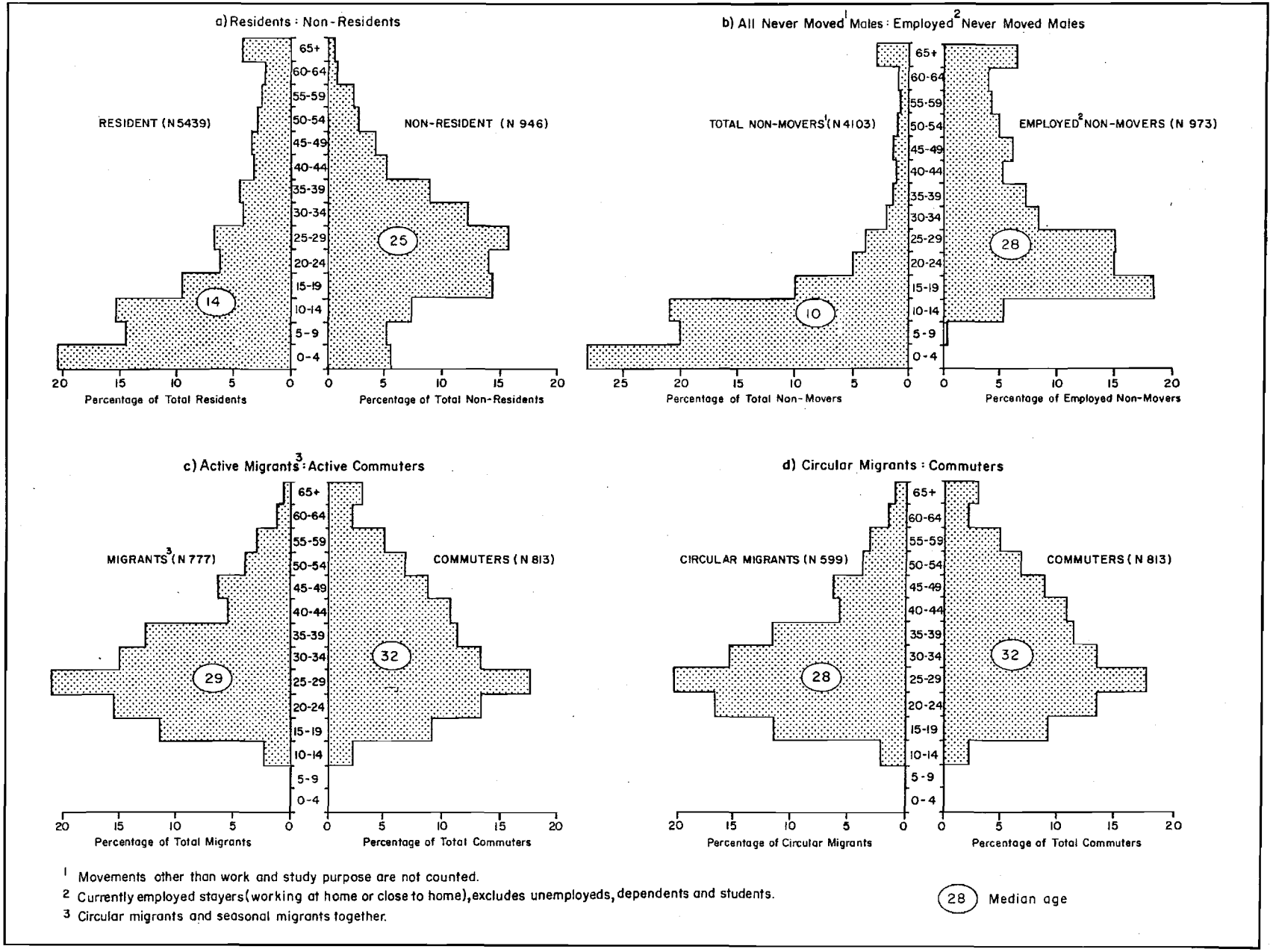
Age profiles for mover categories

The age distribution of the commuters and migrants in the young working ages (15-39 years) are almost identical (Figure 6.1d). The main concentration of movers falls within the 25-29 age group, followed by the immediate upper and lower age groups (i.e. age groups 30-34 and 20-24). The larger concentration of movers in the young adult ages is found to be true for all survey villages.

The proportion of those in the young working ages is higher among migrants (76 percent) than among commuters (63 percent). Conversely, the percentage of movers in the ages over 39 years is higher among commuters (35 percent) than among migrants (21 percent). As larger numbers of commuters continue to move well into their forties and fifties, the median age for commuters is higher (32 years) than that for migrants (29 years).

The age distribution patterns of seasonal migrants (SMs) and circular migrants (CMs) are very close to each other. From the age of 20 to 59 years the patterns are almost identical. The differences are found among teenagers and in old aged people (Appendix 4). In these age groups there are more CMs than SMs and after the age of 59 the incidence of seasonal migration virtually disappears. The reason why younger aged and older aged people show less interest in seasonal

Figure 6·1 AGE STRUCTURE OF DIFFERENT GROUPS OF MALES



[1] Movements other than work and study purpose are not counted.

[2] Currently employed stayers (working at home or close to home), excludes unemployeds, dependents and students.

[3] Circular migrants and seasonal migrants together.

(28) Median age

migration is closely related to the fact that manual work is not easy for people at these stages of life.

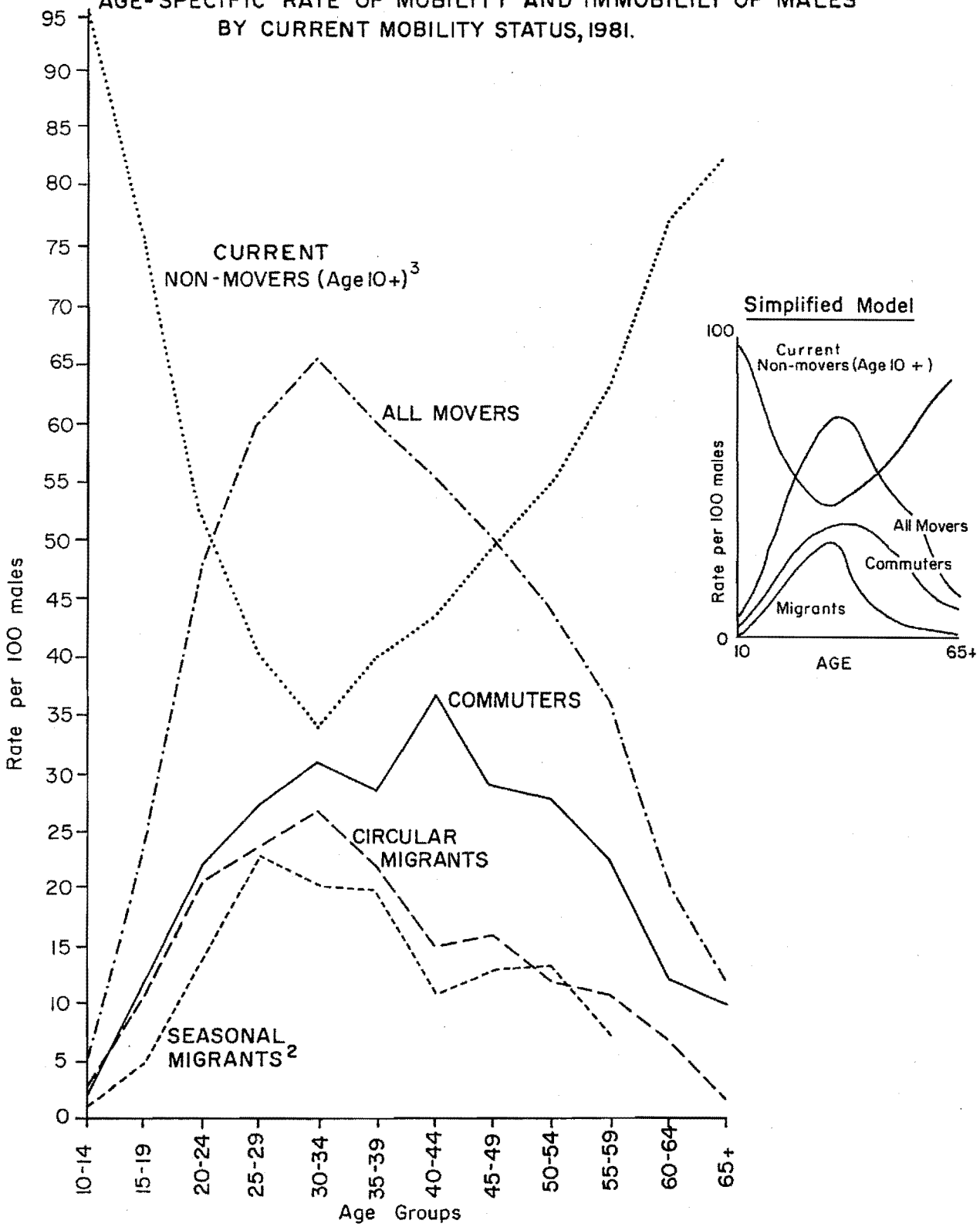
Mobility rates and age

Figure 6.2 (also see Appendix 5) presents data on immobility rates and various mobility rates by age for all males surveyed in the 14 villages. It is evident that the rates of immobility, commuting, and migration at different ages follow a distinctive pattern. The overall relationship between age and commuting rate can be summed up as follows: rates of commuting are low before adulthood, rise sharply up to the late twenties or early thirties and then remain fairly stable up until the mid-fifties after which they decrease slowly with increasing age. The rates of circular migration are low before adulthood, rise sharply from the late teens to mid-twenties and then continue to rise, although less sharply, up until the mid-thirties. From around age 35 the rates start to decrease rapidly up to the mid-forties and thereafter decrease slowly with increasing age.

Among the commuters, there is little variation in commuting rates from ages 25 to 54. After the age of 34, commuting rates remain much higher than migration rates. For people aged 35 years and over it is double (25 percent) the rate of circular migration (13 percent). At this stage of life villagers are more liable to commute than migrate because higher age, along with increasing responsibilities to look after family

Figure 6·2

AGE-SPECIFIC RATE[1] OF MOBILITY AND IMMOBILILY OF MALES BY CURRENT MOBILITY STATUS, 1981.



1. For non-movers rate indicates percentage of male immobile and for others it shows percentage of mobile (see Appendix 5)

2. For seasonal migrants, data are based on Sakhipur survey villages.

3. Excluding all current movers who moved for doing work

and farm in the village, very often creates obstacles to movement.

The life cycle and commuting

Commuting has become part of the life cycle of villagers from youth through to old age. Various reasons could be adduced to explain the wide acceptance of this form of movement. First, commuting provides short-distance movement opportunities for all in general, but for non-adult and older persons in particular. Among the elderly commuters (those aged over 59 years), 83 percent limited their journeys to the neighbouring rural areas. Rural-urban commuters, on the other hand, are mostly confined to the young and adult villagers because of the distance to destinations.

In the second place, one can easily earn a living through commuting without losing one's village employment or farm engagement. So married males and household heads usually find commuting much easier than migration, since they can look after their families and grehasties as well as obtaining some income through commuting. This is one of the main reasons why middle aged and elderly villagers show more interest in commuting than in migration.

Finally, commuters from the older age groups have some other barriers which prevent them from migrating across their cultural domain. They are mostly unskilled or less skilled and have little or no education in comparison with circular migrants as well

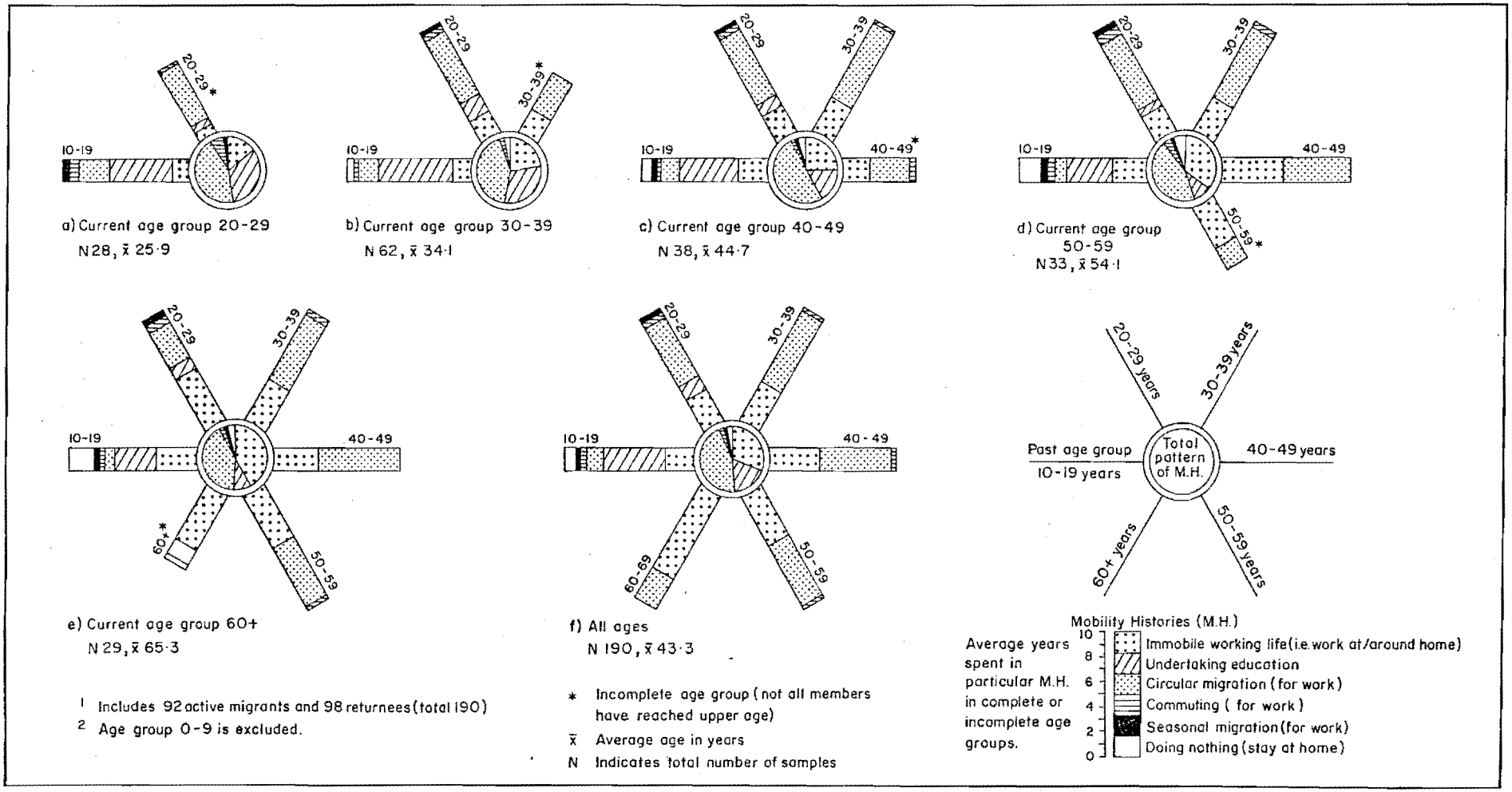
as young commuters. Moreover, they are less familiar with urban work or any formal job in the rural sector. As a result, they tend to be concentrated in the traditional occupations, either wage earning or doing simple trades.

Migration and age through time

Given the widespread adoption of non-permanent forms of relocation by working people from rural areas in Bangladesh, there is an urgent need for information concerning the retrospective mobility behaviour of people in different age groups. The mobility histories of 190 randomly selected circular migrants, 92 of whom are active migrants while the remaining 98 are returnees, afford some interesting information on the incidence of migration by age group at different times during the past thirty years, are illustrated in Figure 6.3. The groups are defined by the current age of the migrants (Figure 6.3). Mobility histories are not shown for people aged less than ten years because the study did not find any incidence of movement for employment at that early stage of life.

A cross-examination of mobility histories of migrants from different age groups shows some interesting results. It is evident that older males spent less time in their youth (ages 10-29 years) on employment related migration and education than their counterparts currently in those age groups (Figure 6.3). The patterns further exhibit that the older age males

Figure 6·3 RETROSPECTIVE MOBILITY HISTORIES OF CIRCULAR MIGRANTS[1] BY TEN YEARS AGE GROUP[2]



[1] Includes 92 active migrants and 98 returnees (total 190)

[2] Age group 0-9 is excluded.

* Incomplete age group (not all members have reached upper age)

x̄ Average age in years

N Indicates total number of samples

Source: Life history surveys of 190 circular migrants

tended to stay at home for longer periods than the younger generation. Two to three decades ago, when the present older migrants and return migrants were young, many of them did not feel the necessity of moving to obtain a livelihood. They found work at or around home more often than the present generation of young adults, and sometimes they did not work at all.

Similarly, education was not considered so important by the present older generation when they were young. By the 1960s when demographic and economic pressures had increased rapidly, rural people, especially the young seeking work for the first time, had begun to face tremendous job shortages and heavy competition for getting employment in and around their native villages.

It is worthwhile mentioning here that in the rural areas, agricultural land provides the major source of employment. In most cases a family's land is owned by the parents who, due to economic reasons, often delay distribution of land to their heirs. As a result, a growing number of unmarried or newly married young adults are being forced to view migration as an alternative strategy for living. In recent years, increasing interest in education amongst the young is also a reflection of the growing competition for those scarce rural resources of land and employment.

Pressure from a rapidly growing population and scarcity of land/employment also affected many older

generation migrants in their youth, but they have felt these pressures more seriously in recent times. Moreover, the significance of such pressures on them when they were young was definitely less than it is for present day young families.

The life cycle and circular migration

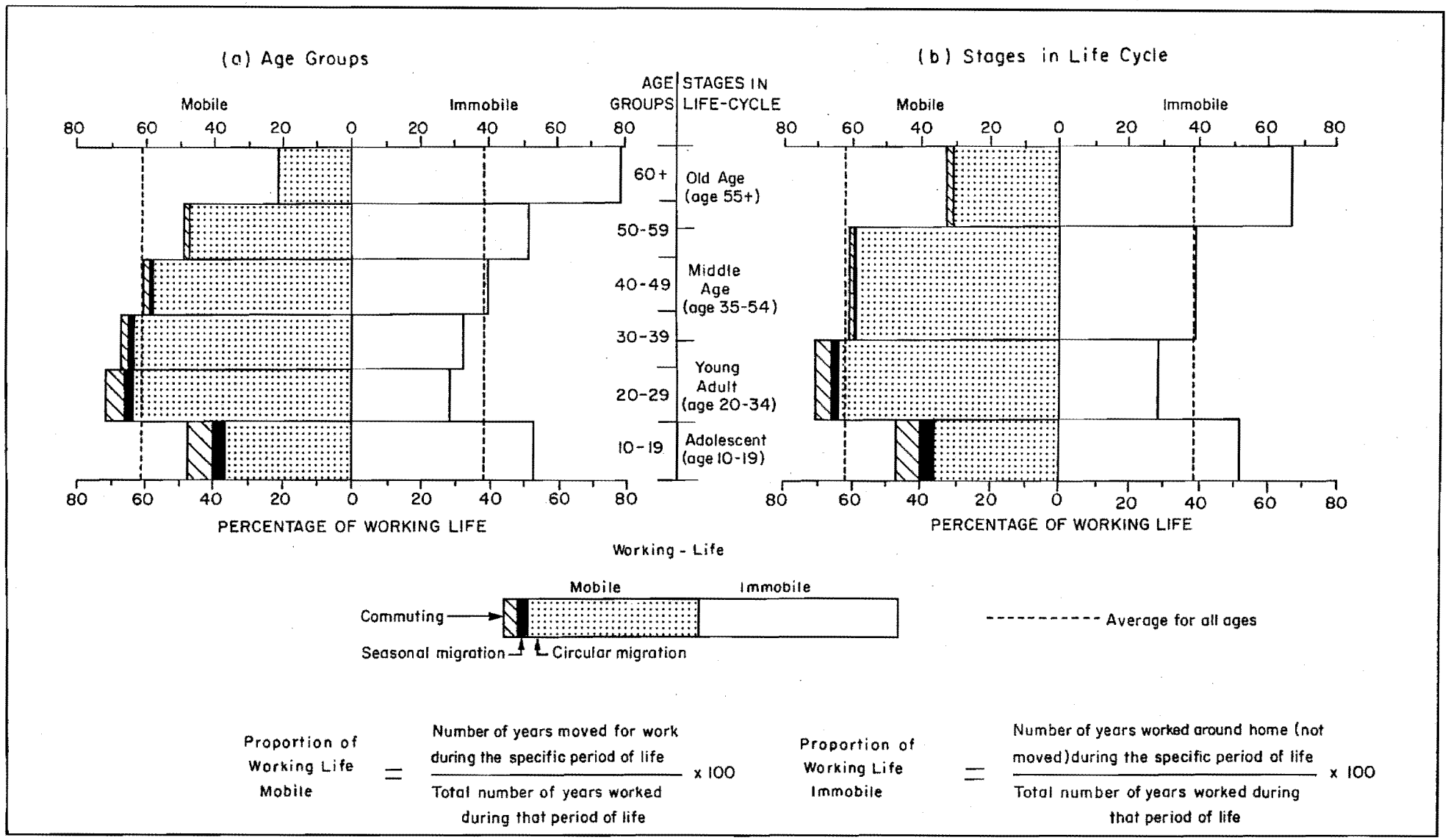
An attempt was made to establish a general model for circular migrants showing the relative proportion of their working lives spent as migrants (mobile) or in the village (immobile) at different stages of the life-cycle (Figure 6.4). On average, a circular migrant was found to spend 60 percent of his total working life on migratory work and the remaining 40 percent on work in or around his home village. At different stages of life, the duration of mobile and immobile working periods varies quite significantly. Young adults spend nearly three-quarters of their working life working away from home, while at old age the same amount of time was spent working at home or near it. People aged between 35 and 54 years showed a different pattern which almost corresponds to the average pattern stated above.

Changes in mobility behaviour

Changes in mobility behaviour at various stages of the migrant's life cycle are shown in Figure 6.4. Experience of commuting and seasonal migration is more common among younger circular migrants. With increasing age circular migrants became much more stable

Figure 6·4

MOBILITY AND IMMOBILITY DURING THE WORKING-LIFE OF CIRCULAR MIGRANTS



$$\text{Proportion of Working Life Mobile} = \frac{\text{Number of years moved for work during the specific period of life}}{\text{Total number of years worked during that period of life}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Proportion of Working Life Immobile} = \frac{\text{Number of years worked around home (not moved) during the specific period of life}}{\text{Total number of years worked during that period of life}} \times 100$$

Source: Life history surveys of 190 circular migrants

in their mobility behaviour and the small proportion of their mobile working lives spent in commuting and seasonal migration are a reflection of their movement behaviour when they were younger.

The propensity to change one form of mobility for another, gradually decreases as the mover slowly proceeds to middle age and old age. This could be the general pattern for all types of movers, as we know that with the advance of working life, people become more fixed in their attitudes and behaviour such as the selection of a particular occupation, working place and dwelling place. On many occasions any change of these results in a change in mobility pattern as well.

6.1.2 Levels of education

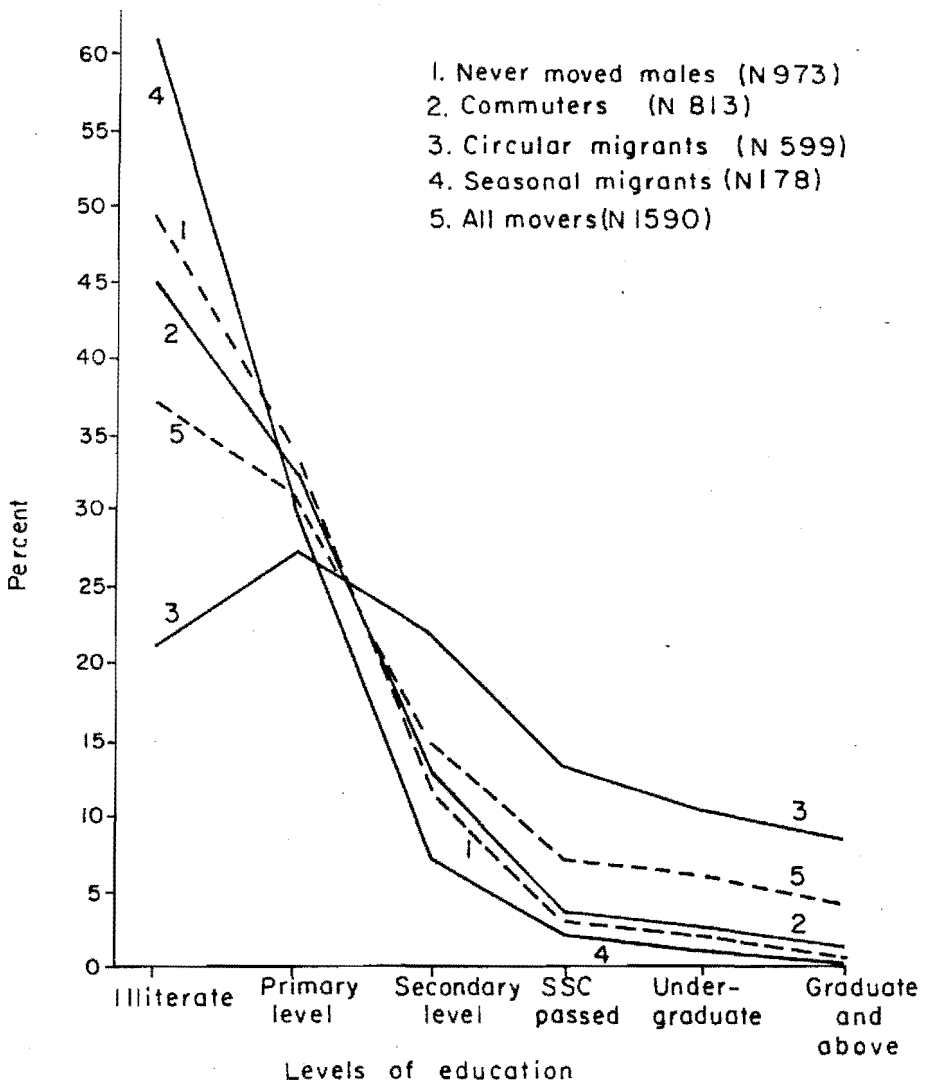
Education and mobility type

The relationship between mobility type and education level is clearly evident in Figure 6.5 and Tables 6.1 and 6.2. It is apparent that circular migrants have achieved better education than other types of movers and also non-movers. There are fewer illiterates (21 percent) among them in comparison with commuters (45 percent), seasonal migrants (61 percent) and never-moved earning members (49 percent).

At the other end of the education ladder, the percentage of circular migrants with secondary, higher secondary and tertiary schooling far exceeds the corresponding figures for the commuters, seasonal

Figure 6·5

EDUCATION LEVELS OF COMMUTERS, CIRCULAR MIGRANTS, SEASONAL MIGRANTS AND NEVER MOVED[1] MALES, 1981



1. Includes never moved employed males

SSC. Secondary School Certificate

migrants and non-movers (Figure 6.5). Those who attained tertiary degrees (graduate and post-graduate) are more likely to be circular migrants than to practise other mobility patterns. Commuters have a higher level of education than non-movers and seasonal migrants, but it is markedly lower than circular migrants.

Literacy and occupation

Numerous studies in the Third World region (see Connell et al. 1976) have shown that migrants are better educated than those who have never moved out of their parental place or those like commuters and seasonal migrants, who have mostly remained at the village of origin. The high rate of literacy among the circular migrants (79 percent) can be explained by analysing some of their attributes. Of these, the migrant's occupation seems to be very important.

It appears from Table 6.2 that the migrants' high literacy rate is related to the presence of a high proportion of non-manual workers (e.g. salary earners, traders and a few other occupation groups). The educational levels of these circular migrants, especially the salary earners, are far better than the other occupational groups. For example, the rate of illiteracy among the non-agricultural day labourers is five to six times higher than the rate for salary earners. Both factory workers and traders have a better education than the day labourers, but their educational achievements are still much lower compared

Table 6.1

Education Levels of Commuters by Location, Occupation, and Movement Stream

(percentages)

Characteristic	Illiterate (361)	Primary level (274)	Secondary level (106)	SSC passed (33)	Under-graduate (27)	Graduate and above (12)	Total (813)
Study Area							
Rampal (433)	55.7	25.9	10.8	2.5	3.2	1.8	100.0
Chandina (241)	29.0	45.2	15.3	5.8	3.3	1.2	100.0
Sakhipur (139)	36.0	38.1	15.8	5.7	3.6	0.7	100.0
All areas (813)	44.4	33.7	13.0	4.0	3.3	1.5	100.0
Major Occupation Types at Commuting Place(s)							
Traders (463)	43.0	36.7	13.6	3.7	2.6	0.4	100.0
Factory workers (66)	69.7	16.7	10.6	3.0	-	-	100.0
Non-agricultural day labourers (119)	68.9	26.0	5.0	-	-	-	100.0
Salary earners (89)	4.5	25.8	27.0	15.7	15.7	11.2	100.0
Village artisans (54)	38.9	50.0	11.1	-	-	-	100.0
All others (22)	40.9	54.5	-	-	4.5	-	100.0
Total (813)	44.4	33.7	13.0	4.0	3.3	1.5	100.0
Rural and Urban Streams							
Rural (439)	47.1	31.4	13.4	4.5	2.5	0.9	100.0
Urban (278)	43.5	33.4	11.9	3.2	5.0	2.9	100.0
Both (96)	34.4	44.8	14.6	4.2	2.1	-	100.0

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to numbers of commuters.

Table 6.2

Education Levels of Circular Migrants by Location, Occupation and Movement Stream

(percentages)

Characteristic	Illiterate (N 124)	Primary level (N 160)	Secondary level (N 128)	SSC passed (N 79)	Under-graduate (N 60)	Graduate and above (N 48)	Total (N 599)
Study Area							
Rampal (N 249)	25.3	27.7	18.1	11.6	10.4	6.8	100
Chandina (N 132)	6.1	22.0	31.8	13.6	13.6	12.9	100
Sakhipur (N 218)	24.3	28.4	18.8	14.7	7.3	6.4	100
All areas (N 599)	20.7	26.7	21.4	13.2	10.0	8.0	100
Major Occupation Types at Destination							
Traders (N 125)	24.8	38.4	19.2	8.0	5.6	4.0	100
Factory workers (N 42)	30.9	40.5	23.8	4.8			100
Non-agricultural day labourers (N 49)	53.0	38.8	8.2				100
Salary earners (N 308)	9.4	14.9	24.4	21.1	16.6	13.6	100
Village artisans (N 29)	10.3	48.3	41.4				100
All others (N 46)	47.8	34.8	6.5	4.3	4.3	2.2	100
Total (N 599)	20.7	26.7	21.4	13.2	10.0	8.0	100
Rural and Urban Streams							
Rural (N 58)	25.9	36.2	8.6	12.1	6.9	10.3	100
Urban (N 541)	20.1	25.7	22.7	13.3	10.3	7.8	100

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to numbers of migrants.

to salary earners.

In the previous section, it was indicated that circular migrants tend to be younger in comparison to commuters and seasonal migrants. It can also be established here that the young are better educated than older people. Thus, age and education are closely related, and this is reflected in the education levels of different groups of migrants.

Due to low levels of education, commuters have a different occupation structure to that of the circular migrants (Tables 6.1 and 6.2). Salary earners whose education levels were found to be far better than any other occupation group constituted only 11 percent of the total commuters (89 out of 813). On the other hand, the traders who formed nearly three-fifths of the commuters mostly originated from the illiterate or less literate (primary level) villagers. Furthermore, a large percentage of commuter wage earners and factory workers (about 70 percent) have never been to any school.

The levels of education of commuters, migrants and others, reflect the structure of education in the different areas. People from Chandina are comparatively better educated than those in Sakhipur and Rampal (see Chapter 3). Hence commuters and circular migrants from this area tend to have more education.

Education and movement stream

The education level of movers can be further

examined in the context of movement (Table 6.3). There are marked variations in education attainment among the rural and urban movers. The level of education is inversely related to movement within rural areas and directly related to circulation between village and towns. In general the propensity to move to towns increases with the rise of education levels. This is not only because of the shortage of white-collar jobs in the rural areas, but also because people with a good education are mostly unwilling to do manual work or very low status services (e.g. caretaking, peonage).

It is further evident that intra-rural circular migrants, who comprised only 10 percent of the total 599 migrants, mostly came from the lower and upper levels of the education strata (Table 6.3). Because moderately educated people have very limited job options in rural areas, white-collar jobs such as teaching at schools or undertaking office jobs at thana centres, are mostly suitable for graduates who often come as migrants from distant villages.

In other occupations including low-status services, people with moderate schooling may well be averse to accepting an inferior position. Above all, formal education at moderate to higher levels creates barriers between a person and the traditions and culture of his community (Pickford 1984, 198). As a result, he cannot undertake any occupation which is customarily the work of an illiterate or a person with a low level

Table 6.3

Ratio of Rural:Urban Movers by Education Level for Commuters, Circular Migrants and Seasonal Migrants, 1981

Education Level	Commuters (N 813)	Circular Migrants (N 599)	Seasonal Migrants (N 178)	All movers (N 1590)
Illiterate	61:39	12:88	56:44	51:49
Primary Level	57:43	13:87	53:47	43:57
Secondary Level	60:40	4:96	62:38	33:67
SSC Passed	65:35	9:91	0:100	26:74
Undergraduate	45:55	7:93	33:67	20:80
Graduate and above	33:67	13:87	-	17:83

of schooling.

6.2 OCCUPATION STRUCTURE

Unlike demographic traits, occupation characteristics are more complex, particularly in rural areas where a person often holds two or three jobs, shares work with family members, is paid in cash, kind or both, and frequently changes his occupation due to a variety of reasons. Figure 6.6 shows the occupation structure of all working men by their current mobility behaviour. The figure clearly suggests that occupational selectivity is strong among the mobile and non-mobile workers. Non-movers are predominantly involved in local agricultural activities, commuters mostly travel to trade and do business or earn off-farm wages, while circular migrants go away for salaried jobs. This broad patterning of movement by occupation seems to be true for other rural regions in Bangladesh.

6.2.1 Occupation by mover category

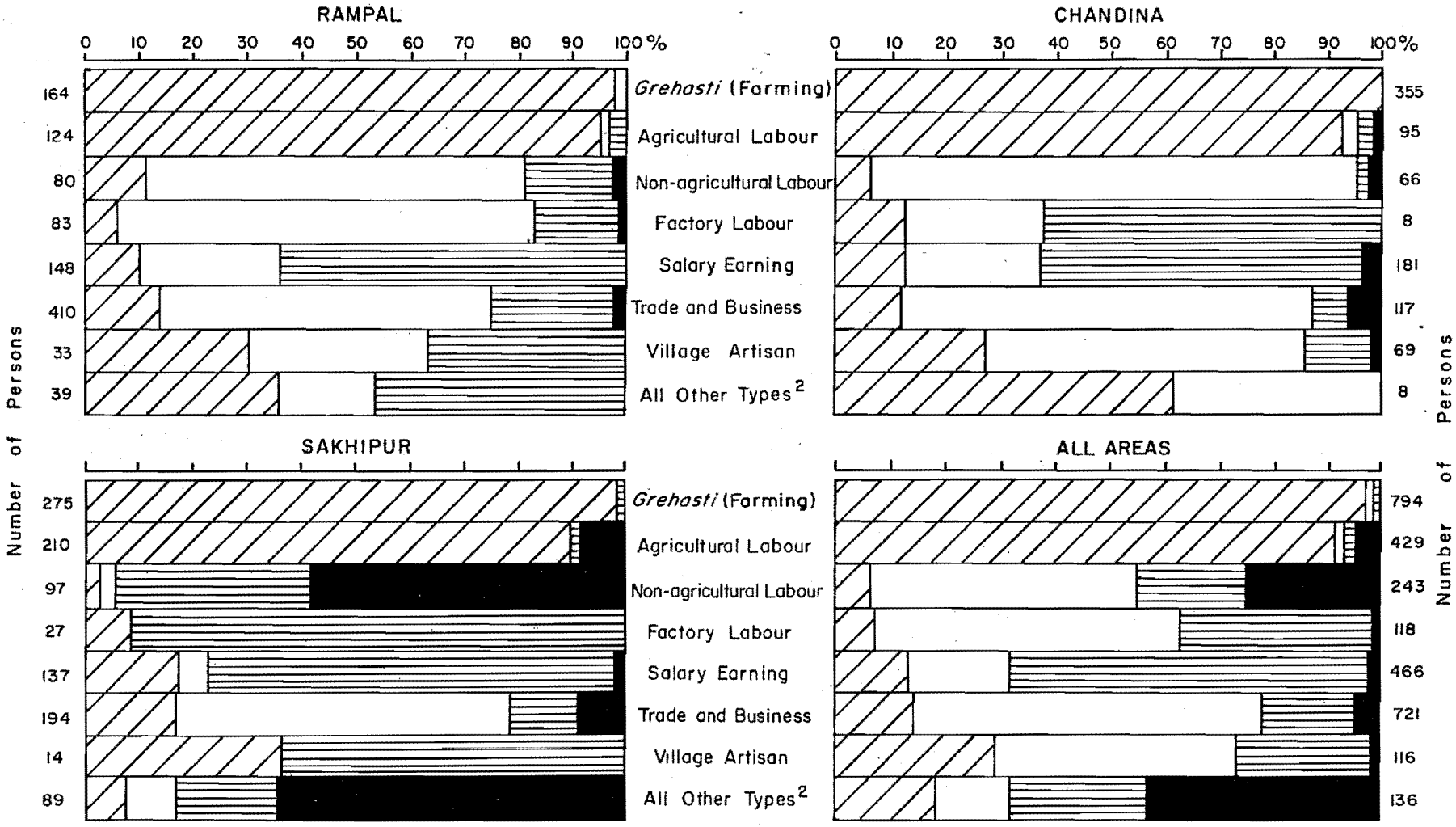
Commuters

In each study location a long list of commuter occupations was found. Within this list, certain occupations are commonly selected by a large number of commuters. In Rampal, vegetable traders, factory workers, milkmen, porters and rickshaw pullers all together accounted for 74 percent of the total 433 commuters.

Chandina has a different pattern where the top

Figure 6·6

OCCUPATION[1] STRUCTURE OF ACTIVE MOVERS AND CURRENT NON-MOVERS[3] IN THE STUDY AREAS , 1981



1. Data shows principal occupation for non-movers, and destination occupation for movers.
2. Including data not stated.
3. Includes never moved persons and ex-movers (who stopped moving temporarily or permanently)

five commuting occupations are - rickshaw pullers, handloom weavers, cloth traders, drivers (truck, bus and tractor) and vegetable traders. They included nearly 60 percent of the area's total commuters. Sakhipur shows a further different pattern in which goat traders and rabi crop traders are common occupations among the commuters. Each of these occupations accounts for 25 percent of the jobs recorded by commuters. The above mentioned occupation patterns are strongly influenced by the areas agricultural structure and the nature of transport linkages with neighbouring towns and rural trade/service centres (described in detail in the preceding chapters).

Circular migrants

The broad patterns of destination-occupations of circular migrants from Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur are shown in Table 6.4. The majority of migrants are salary earners. Traders, second in importance, accounted for one-fifth (21 percent). Non-agricultural labourers and factory workers each comprised less than ten percent of the total 599 migrants. However, there is substantial variation in occupation patterns among the migrants in the three study places. In Rampal, salary earners and traders were found to be almost equally important. Each group accounted for 38 percent of the total migrants from the region. Other occupation groups such as factory workers, off-farm labourers, and village artisans were also weighted

Table 6.4

Major Occupation Types of Circular Migrants at Their Destinations by Location, Migration Stream and Income

(percentages)

Characteristic	Traders (N 125)	Factory Workers (N 42)	Non-agricultural day labourers (N 49)	Salary earners (N 308)	Village artisans (N 29)	Others (N 46)	Total (N 599)
Study Area							
Rampal (N 249)	37.8	5.2	5.2	38.2	4.8	8.8	100.0
Chandina (N 132)	5.3	3.8	0.7	81.8	6.1	2.3	100.0
Sakhipur (N 218)	11.0	11.0	16.1	48.2	4.1	9.6	100.0
All areas (N 599)	20.9	7.0	8.2	51.4	4.8	7.7	100.0
Rural and Urban Stream							
Rural (N 58)	13.8	10.4	1.7	41.4	1.7	31.0	100.0
Urban (N 541)	21.6	6.6	8.9	52.5	5.2	5.2	100.0
Some other[1] income sources of the migrant's household (in percent)							
Agriculture	78	69	57	87	79	83	81
Livestock	33	35	8	46	34	24	37
Trades	-	29	16	19	24	35	-
Selling labour[2]	12	-	-	13	24	32	-
Salaried income	21	64	4	-	41	20	-
Average no. of income source (no. per household)	2.5	2.8	2.0	2.8	2.8	2.3	2.7

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to numbers of migrants.

1 Other than the migrant's destination occupation.
2 Agricultural and non-agricultural.
- Not applicable due to overlap with destination occupation.

Table 6.5

Major Occupation Types of Commuters at Their Destinations by Location, Movement Stream and Income

(percentages)

Characteristic	Traders (463)	Factory Workers (66)	Non-agricultural day labourers (119)	Salary earners (89)	Village artisans (54)	Others (22)	Total (813)
Study Area							
Rampal (433)	58.4	14.8	13.2	8.8	2.8	2.1	100.0
Chandina (241)	36.5	0.8	24.9	18.2	17.4	2.1	100.0
Sakhipur (139)	87.8	-	1.4	5.0	-	5.7	100.0
All areas (813)	57.0	8.1	14.6	10.9	6.6	2.7	100.0
Rural and Urban Stream							
Rural (439)	49.4	13.4	16.8	9.8	2.3	1.8	100.0
Urban (278)	75.5	2.5	2.5	11.9	3.2	4.3	100.0
Both (96)	39.6	-	39.6	13.5	5.2	2.1	100.0
Some other[1] income sources of the commuter's household (in percent)							
Agriculture	83	58	48	81	65	91	74
Livestock	48	24	16	46	43	55	41
Trades	-	23	15	24	28	50	-
Selling labour[2]	27	-	-	8	28	27	-
Salaried income	9	15	5	-	6	16	-
Average no. of income source (no. per household)	2.6	2.2	1.9	2.7	2.7	3.2	2.6

Note: Figures in parentheses refer to numbers of commuters.

1 Other than the commuter's destination occupation.
2 Agricultural and non-agricultural
- Not applicable due to overlap with destination occupation.

equally but each comprised a very small proportion of the total (five percent as against 38 percent for salary earners or traders).

Circular migration in Chandina is common among white-collar workers only. At least four-fifths (82 percent) of the migrants were found in that occupation category. The rest of the movers were mainly traders, village artisans, and factory workers. In Sakhipur half of the migrants (48 percent) were found to move for salaried jobs and services. Among other categories of occupations, the proportion of day labourers is fairly significant (16 percent) and they out-numbered all other occupation-migrants including traders and factory workers.

Salaried employment and personal networks

Salary earners include a wide variety of occupation-migrants, from peons (office-messengers) to high ranking public servants, less skilled to highly skilled persons, and defence personnel such as police and military men. The majority of salary earners (around two-thirds) fell into the first category, and nearly half of those came from the low cadre jobs such as peons, guards, and petty clerks. The other two broad occupation fields (i.e. skilled work and police/military) equally shared the remaining one-third of salary earners.

The nature of occupation of salary-earning migrants is not significantly influenced by local and

commercial settings. In this case the educational qualification of an individual mover would be the best determinant. Other associated factors are the functional characteristics of the neighbouring towns and the influence of relatives and friends in getting jobs.

It was often perceived, while interviewing, that the selectivity of migrants' occupation was to a great extent influenced by the presence of relatives and friends who lived (temporarily or permanently) in towns. Generally, the significance of this influence depends on a number of factors, such as job and economic status of the relative, his socio-political networks or ties by dint of which he helps others to get jobs, and the strength of links with the native village and villagers.

In Chandina there were 33 defence personnel (mostly soldiers) among the total 132 circular migrants. The study observed that this high rate of participation in military jobs by Chandina people was influenced by a high-ranking military officer. He helped hundreds of his rural relatives to get military or civil jobs mostly in urban areas. The process of getting jobs through honest or dishonest favours of relatives and friends was found to be quite common everywhere in Bangladesh. Data from all the survey locations indicated that at least 70 percent of migrants among the salary earners and factory workers were helped or favoured by someone known to them.

Traders and labourers

Within the three study areas, only Rampal has a sizeable proportion (38 percent) of migrant-traders. Most of them (55 percent) are dealing with fruits and vegetables, a traditional area of work for Rampalese. Other migrant-traders, including those from Chandina and Sakhipur, have come from a wide variety of common trades and businesses such as clothing, groceries, and stationery.

The most common migrant-occupation among the non-agricultural day labourers is rickshaw-pulling. Out of a total of 49 migrant-labourers, 30 were rickshaw pullers. Sakhipur alone accounted for 22 migrant rickshaw pullers. The scope for employment by day labourers in and around Sakhipur is very limited and hence the labourers are forced to choose a form of migration (seasonal and non-seasonal) to obtain a livelihood. Other wage-occupations undertaken by labourers are mainly construction work and porterage.

Table 6.4 also shows the distribution of migrants' occupations by their streams of movement. Non-agricultural labourers and village artisans (e.g. weavers, tailors, barbers and blacksmiths) rarely migrate to rural areas. These occupations, as seen in Chapter 4, are more suitable for commuters than migrants (also see Table 6.5).

6.2.2 Dual occupation structure

Commuters and part-time farming

In the rural areas, commuters have access to a wider variety of occupations than other types of movers and non-movers. They have the advantage of working both in and outside their home village and hence a large number of commuters spend part of their regular (not necessarily daily) working time in local farm activities in addition to their off-farm jobs. In the rural areas, the practice of part-time farming combined with off-farm jobs has a long history. A recent study by Ali (1980) shows that the number of part-time farmers has increased rapidly compared to full-time farmers from 8.4 percent to 84 percent within the three decades since 1950 (see Appendix 2). Rapid population growth, fragmentation of land holdings, and falling farm incomes forced the farmers to seek additional work off their holdings.

It is difficult to assess the contributions of part-time farmers to the total volume of commuters from all rural areas in Bangladesh given inadequate census data. However, in general, it can be assumed that since a farmer through commuting finds it possible to have an off-farm job in addition to maintaining his farm work, a large number of part-time farmers would be commuters. Thus the volume of commuters is also likely to have increased rapidly since 1950.

Empirical data from the 14 study villages

strongly supports this assumption. Seventy five percent of the commuters were found to have local farm work in addition to their respective off-farm jobs (Table 6.6). Further analysis also revealed that only 14 percent of commuters consider farming as their principal occupation. The remaining 61 percent undertook farming as a secondary occupation. In other words, the overwhelming majority of commuters (81 percent) leave their village regularly to work in the job which generates most of their income (Table 6.8). For off-farm labourers and salary earners the rate stands at a higher level (93 to 95 percent) than the others.

Although the dual occupation structure among the commuters is quite common, there are some commuters who do not have any second occupation. A close analysis of the occupation characteristics of commuters reveals that those who do not engage in any sort of agricultural activity often find it difficult to get a second occupation. Of the 120 sample commuters, 24 of them had one occupation each (Table 6.6). They came from the landless and illiterate segment of the village community and engaged in either small pedlar trades or non-agricultural labour through daily commuting. Villagers who usually rent out land tend to avoid renting land to them as they are poor and cannot provide necessary inputs (e.g. credit, ploughs, better seeds, and irrigation) to farm the land. Under these circumstances it becomes difficult for landless poor

Table 6.6

Occupations of Sample Commuters and Their Households, and Their Fathers

Major types of occupation	Commuters (total sample 120)										Principal occupation of commuter's father	
	Commuters						Commuter's household					
	Destination occupation		Principal occupation		Second occupation		Principal occupation		Second occupation			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Grehasti	-		17	14	65	54	23	19	59	49	71	59
Agricultural labour	-		-		8	7	1	1	11	9	16	13
Non-agricultural labour	20	17	20	17	2	2	20	17	1	1	3	2
Trade and business	68	57	61	51	9	7	54	45	14	12	17	14
Salaried jobs	25	21	17	14	8	7	13	11	13	11	3	2
Village artisans	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	2
Others	5	4	2	2	2	2	6	5	6	5	7	6
Total	120	100	120	100	96*	80	120	100	106*	88	120	100

* Excluding 24 commuters and 14 commuters' households who had no second occupation.

Table 6.7

Occupations of Sample Circular Migrants, Their Households, and Their Fathers

Major types of occupation	Circular migrants (total sample 93)										Principal occupation of migrant's father	
	Migrants						Migrant's household					
	Destination occupation		Principal occupation		Second occupation		Principal occupation		Second occupation			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Grehasti	-		-		17	18	15	16	52	56	60	65
Agricultural labour	-		-		-		-		3	3	3	3
Non-agricultural labour	11	12	11	12	-		6	6	-		1	1
Trade and business	14	15	15	16	3	3	18	19	7	8	9	10
Salaried jobs	66	71	65	70	-		51	55	17	18	20	21
Others	2	2	2	2	1	1	3	3	8	9		
Total	93	100	93	100	21*	23	93	100	86*	92	93	100

* Excluding 72 migrants and 7 migrants' households who had no second occupation.

commuters to find a satisfactory second occupation.

Circular migrants

Unlike commuters and seasonal migrants, the practice of dual or multiple occupations among the circular migrants was not observed very much (Table 6.7). A sample of 93 migrants shows that only 21 have additional employment. The majority (72 out of 93) have one job over the whole year. There are two important reasons why circular migrants are unlikely to seek additional or secondary employment. First, it is difficult to get a matchable combination of two off-farm jobs (one as principal and the other as additional) where a person can work simultaneously without interfering with the terms of either job. In recent years, urban population growth has been racing far ahead of employment growth, and thus in towns it is very difficult to get even one job at a time. Of those 21 additional jobs, only four are in towns.

Second, a large number of migrants from different occupation groups already have other income sources (other than work at their destination) in their villages such as agriculture, livestock, trade etc. (Table 6.4). Non-migrant family members such as stayers, commuters and returnees usually look after those additional income enterprises. Moreover, incomes from agricultural land and the rearing of cattle can be reaped through the process of renting out both land and cattle. There is fierce competition among the labourers, sharecroppers,

tenants and marginal farmers for renting these two resources at any condition set by the land and cattle owners.

The nature of additional employment of the 21 sample migrants shows that 17 movers have been engaged in part-time farming in their native villages and 4 have been doing part-time business in their destination towns. At the place of migration their principal occupation types were as follows: 14 salary earners, 3 rickshaw-pullers, 2 traders, 1 factory worker and another unclassified. Those 17 migrants who had additional employment in agriculture were found to pay frequent visits to their native villages and stay there for a few days (on average five days per visit). During that time they accomplished most of their farm activities. A further analysis of the data also reveals that none of these 17 migrants had an extra worker in their village family, and thus they had to practise two occupations.

Non-agricultural activities

A shift in principal occupation from farm to non-farm activities is not new in the rural areas; but recently it has spread over the whole country mainly due to the pressure of population on farm land. This type of change has been encouraged in the villages by commuting and migration. Tables 6.6 and 6.7 examine this issue by introducing a comparative picture of occupations of the movers (commuters and circular

migrants), their households, and their fathers. The results indicate that the fundamental difference in occupation structures between current movers and their fathers is that most of the former have undertaken agriculture as a second occupation or income source for their households, whereas their fathers mostly relied on farming as their principal source of employment or income. This change in the principal occupation of the movers and their fathers has occurred during the last two to three decades, or roughly one generation period.

The main reason, as mentioned earlier, is an ever-growing population. As the population grows the amount of agricultural land per capita shrinks. When this happens employment related to land also shrinks, creating an occupational shift from the agriultural to non-agricultural sector. The occupational mobility from the agricultural to non-agricultural sector in Bangladesh is also apparent from Tables 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 and this phenomenon has been discussed in the context of urbanization in Chapter 2.

In Tables 6.8 and 6.9 the movers destination occupations and principal occupations are examined. The data reveal that most of the movers usually leave their village with a view to undertake their main occupations. Among the commuters the proportion of those who moved for undertaking a principal occupation was 81 percent (655 out of 813 commuters), while among the migrants this proportion was found to be as high as 95 percent

Table 6.8

Commuters' Destination Occupation by Principal Occupation, 1981.

Principal occupation \ Destination occupation	Grehasti	Agricultural day labour	Non-agricultural day labour	Factory work	Salaried jobs	Trade and business	Village artisans	Others	Total N
Grehasti	2	1	3		2	102	4		114
Agricultural day labour		2	5	3	2	14			26
Non-agricultural day labour			111(93)		1	2		2	116
Factory work				63(95)					63
Salaried jobs					83(93)		14	1	98
Trade and business					1	346(74)			347
Village artisans						1	34(65)		35
Others								14(82)	14
Total	2	3	119	66	89	465	52	17	813

Note: Figures within parentheses indicate percent of principal occupation over respective type of total destination occupation.

Table 6.9

Circular Migrants' Destination Occupation by Principal Occupation, 1981.

Principal occupation \ Destination occupation	Grehasti	Agricultural day labour	Non-agricultural day labour	Factory work	Salaried jobs	Trade and business	Village artisans	Others	Total N
Grehasti	2	3			1	3		4	13
Agricultural day labour		6	2						8
Non-agricultural day labour			46(94)		1				47
Factory work				41(98)					41
Salaried jobs					303(98)	3	5		311
Trade and business			1	1		117(94)			119
Village artisans					2	1	24(83)	1	28
Others					1	1		30(86)	32
Total	2	9	49	42	308	125	29	35	599

Note: Figures within parentheses indicate percent of principal occupation over respective type of total destination occupation.

(569 out of 599 migrants). The ratio further varied from one occupation group to another as shown in those tables.

It is also apparent from Tables 6.6 and 6.7 that the principal occupations of the movers largely determine the principal occupation patterns of their households. On the basis of the above findings a general statement can thus be made that in rural Bangladesh a structural change of occupation from agricultural to non-agricultural work has been evolving rapidly through the process of circular movement.

6.3 REASONS FOR MOVEMENT

Additional perspectives on this structural change can be obtained from the reasons given by commuters and circular migrants for their spatial mobility. There are several well-known problems associated with data collected retrospectively on reasons for movement, especially the problem of post-facto rationalisation. This is discussed in Appendix 6. In this section the motives for commuting and circular migration are examined using stated reasons for mobility. It should be recalled that this study is concerned only with movement for work, and thus the reasons for and choices of commuting and circular migration are related to the employment aspirations of the movers.

6.3.1 Why do villagers migrate?

Each migrant (active circular migrant or

returnee) in the sample was asked to state his main reason(s) for migration from his village. The question was open-ended and every migrant was free to state more than one reason. Surprisingly, when all the responses were scanned, the results showed that only 36 percent of the migrants (mostly returnees) cited more than one reason, and more surprisingly almost all the responses of the 191 migrants were easily grouped into five broad categories (Table 6.10). This led to the inescapable conclusion that there has been a serious on-going economic, employment, and resource crisis in rural Bangladesh.

The most frequently cited reasons for leaving the village were economic hardship of the family, shortage of agricultural land, and the migrants' negative attitudes towards a peasant farmer's occupation. These account for the stated reasons for migration of 76 percent of the respondents. One-fifth of the sample mentioned the paucity of locally available work as their main reason for migrating. In fact, the overall lack of local employment opportunities in the migrants' villages would be the most important root-cause of out-migration from any rural community in Bangladesh. The reason for this is that the shortage of land in an agrarian country like Bangladesh is associated with the shortage of working opportunities in the rural areas.

Table 6.10

Reasons Given for Circular Migration from Study Villages

Reasons	Response of 93 active CMs		Response of 98 Returnees		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Economic hardship of the family	31	33	39	40	70	37
Shortage of agricultural land	24	26	43	44	67	35
Dislike (or not interested in) grehasti	35	38	28	29	63	33
Inadequate local work opportunities	21	23	17	17	38	20
Patrimonial reason (father migrated therefore son)	16	17	8	8	24	13
All other reasons	1	1	5	6	6	3
Total response[1]	128		140		268	

1 Including multiple responses N Number of responses - Nil

Table 6.11

Reasons Given for Movement of the Circular Migrants, Fathers and Sons

Major Reasons	Circular Migrants n 191		Migrants' Fathers n 107		Migrants' Sons n 56	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Economic hardship of the family	70	37	13	12	17	30
Shortage of agricultural land	67	35	34	32	15	27
Dislike (or not interested in) grehasti	63	33	6	6	10	18
Inadequate local work opportunities	38	20	2	2	5	9
Patrimonial reason	24	13	17	16	8	14
For extra income	1	1	32	30	1	2
Unsatisfactory education facilities in the village	-		2	2	9	16
All other reasons	5	3	5	5	-	
Total response[1]	268		111		65	

Note: Those migrants whose fathers and/or sons never moved for work, were excluded from the analysis.

n Number of cases, N Number of responses
1 Including multiple responses - Nil

Chain migration

Apart from the reasons mentioned so far, a significant proportion of the migrants (13 percent) claimed that they were induced to migrate by their fathers and forefathers. In other words, they had/have been following a "chain migration" process linking one generation with the next. It was also found that chain migration as a stated reason for movement was higher among current migrants (17 percent) than past migrants (8 percent). This suggests that due to the deepening unemployment crisis within rural communites there is a high probability that a son from a rural-base migrant family will follow his father's or elders' mobility behaviour, and the father will try to place his son(s) in the same migrant occupation.

Studies which directly address the issues of chain migration in underdeveloped countries are severely limited. However, on the basis of some indirect accounts (Rimmer et al. 1978; Harrison 1981, 199-205) concerning the rapid expansion of informal sector occupations in the Third World cities, and its attraction to millions of unskilled and semi-skilled workers from the countryside, it can be said that there is an immense prospect for the growth of chain migration in many Third World countries including Bangladesh. The practice of chain migration was apparent in West Java (Hugo 1978a, 173) and India (Banerjee 1983).

Economic stress

Numerous studies have indicated that declining economic opportunities within the countryside has been the predominant cause of work-related migration by village people in many underdeveloped countries. This finding is also substantiated by data from Bangladesh (Tables 6.10 and 6.11). In Table 6.11 the reasons for mobility of three generations of migrants are detailed - the migrant sample, their fathers and their children (mostly sons). It appeared from the results that movements due to economic crisis were more common among the migrants than their fathers.

It is evident that the necessity for rural out-migration was not seriously felt by most village dwellers in Bangladesh up until the early 1960s. Our village data showed that only ten percent of 431 sample respondents (120 stayers, 120 commuters and 191 CMs) had a father who had been a circular migrant, while 16 percent of the respondents' fathers had been seasonal migrants. The intensification of economic stress in rural communities has occurred mainly due to the high rate of population growth, scarcity of local work, shortage of landholdings and lack of appropriate and adequate rural development policies.

Attitudes towards farming

While economic hardship was the most important reason stated for out-migration from villages in Bangladesh, indifferent attitudes towards peasant

farming, especially among educated youths, also accounts for a sizeable amount of circulation between the villages and towns. One-third of the 191 circular migrants told us directly that they did not like to be involved with agricultural activities (grehasti). These migrants largely originated from the young educated group of economically better-off families. Their literacy rate was as high as 94 percent (national male literacy rate was 31 percent in 1981) and even 55 percent of them had successfully completed at least ten years of schooling (corresponding national figure for males was only 5 percent).

Further analysis of the data on these 63 migrants indicates that except for one rickshaw puller all of them were engaged in non-manual occupations such as white-collar work (78 percent) and trade (15 percent). Despite their disinterest in grehasti, the families of these migrants were able to acquire a substantial amount of land; none of them were found to be landless and the average landholding per family was close to four acres (2.5 times higher than the national figure). Due to cheap labour and a huge demand for tenant farming contacts in Bangladesh, these better-off landowning families never confront any difficulties with the cultivation of their holdings.

In contrast to the current migrants, their fathers were much less likely to dislike farming tasks (Table 6.11). The education gap between the two

generations could be the most likely reason for this. In many underdeveloped countries, as Michael Lipton pointed out (1980, 7), the better-off village families profitably invest in education and through migration to urban centres gain further resources (accumulated as education, cash, land or other assets).

Advantages and disadvantages

To gain a more comprehensive picture of migration motives, respondents were asked to state their views on the advantages and disadvantages of migration from villages. The predominance of advantages over disadvantages is clearly apparent in Table 6.12 in which nearly half of the respondents (46 percent) spontaneously replied that they felt no inconvenience in migration. In view of the perceived necessity for leaving the village to get work in present-day Bangladesh, movers saw many opportunities of achieving improved means by living elsewhere.

The major disadvantage perceived by 98 out of 180 migrants, related to the separation from family, relatives and grehasti. These sorts of socio-psychological and economic inconvenience cannot be removed unless a migrant changes his mobility behaviour and practises commuting or seasonal migration, or ceases moving altogether.

In Chapter 4 it was demonstrated that circular migration was overwhelmingly directed to the cities and

Table 6.12

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Circular Migration from Villages

Advantages/Disadvantages	Responses of 90 active CMs		Responses of 95 Returnees		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Advantages						
Attractions for better income	57	63	45	47	102	55
Attractions for cash income	21	23	46	48	67	36
Attractions for children's education	25	28	13	14	38	21
Attractions for pleasing life	8	9	7	7	15	8
All other attractions	5	6	9	9	14	8
Total response[1]	116		120		236	
Disadvantages	Responses of 90 active CMs		Responses of 90 Returnees		Total	
Detachment from home and family	19	21	5	6	24	13
Inconvenience for looking after grehasti	7	8	8	9	15	8
Hard work at destination	5	6	9	10	14	8
Less paid and irregular work	4	4	9	10	13	7
Problem of accommodation and cooking	9	10	2	2	11	6
All other disadvantages	12	13	9	10	21	12
No disadvantage	34	38	48	53	82	46
Total response	90		90		180	

Note: Total samples of circular migrants (CMs) and returnees were 93 and 98 respectively. Movers who did not respond here, were excluded from the analysis.

1 Including multiple responses.

towns. As a means of securing urban employment, this particular mobility type reflects several advantages relating to the movers' aspirations for higher income, better education for children and overall improvement of living conditions. Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of the current migrants and about half (47 percent) of the returnees stated that the prospect for better income in towns is one of the main attractions of circular migration. One reason for this is the decline of real wages in rural areas and the increasing income disparities between rural and urban sectors as well as between rich and poor families.

Many studies carried out by individuals, national agencies, and international bodies (Khan 1977; Alamgir 1974, 1978; Jansen 1983; UN 1980a) have documented those economic facts and derived a frustrating prospect for the country's overwhelming majority of citizens. Khan drew attention to a very sharp decline in real wage earnings in rural areas since the 1970s. The evidence produced by Alamgir (1974) showed a downward trend in real income per capita for both the agricultural and rural populations during the pre-liberation and post-liberation periods. The same author also revealed that between 1949/50 and 1954/55 per capita rural income stayed approximately one-fifth of the per capita urban income.

Support for village society

Another attraction of circular migration between

villages and towns frequently stated by the respondents was to secure the cash required for various purposes in rural areas, such as domestic consumption, school fees, purchasing agricultural inputs, and many occasional events such as marriage, buying land or other assets, and repairing houses. The necessity of external cash support for the rural population has grown rapidly with the rise of population, shortage of land or other rural means of living, and the extent of poverty.

The importance of cash in the rural sector can also be understood in the context of capitalist development - a process which has been gradually restructuring the subsistent peasant economy into a cash exchange economy. A recent study in Bangladesh (Sobhan 1981) estimates that some three-quarters of rural households are at present depending fully or partly on the market economy, as opposed to subsistence cultivation, for their basic staple diet. The role of circular migration in fostering the capitalist transformation of rural economies has been documented in other Third World countries (e.g. Bedford 1973, 133; Whittaker 1984).

6.3.2 Why do villagers prefer to commute?

Apart from investigating the various characteristics of commuters, all 120 commuters in the samples from Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur were individually asked why they preferred commuting to migration. The main

purpose of this inquiry was to explore the rationalisations for commuting from rural areas in Bangladesh. Table 6.13 shows the relative importance of 145 responses made by the 40 commuters in each of the three survey locations. Some of them stated more than one reason, but the most common reason for commuting is that this particular mobility behaviour enables villagers to look after grehasti and family in addition to earning off-farm incomes.

The desire for two occupations

Unlike a migrant, a commuter has the advantage of earning both farm and off-farm incomes simultaneously and at the same time taking good care of his family. In the 14 survey villages, it was observed that the increasing popularity of commuting among the villagers is related to the common practice of dual occupation, particularly farm and off-farm activities. As noted earlier in this chapter land shortage, rapid growth of population and a skewed distribution of rural resources, particularly farm land, has created circumstances favouring a dual occupation strategy. Given that the economic situation is worsening year by year, almost all rural families who depend for the most part upon agricultural income are now anxiously trying to obtain an additional job outside the farm.

In these circumstances, a household earner who wants to work both farm and off-farm sectors finds commuting a convenient strategy for living. In the

village, those families who have a considerable amount of agricultural land but a shortage of additional adult male earners, try to maximize (or supplement) their income through commuting. This, of course, reflects the greater tendency for commuting among the members of nuclear families.

Family commitments

The traditional Muslim society in rural areas is highly critical of females who move outside their home to work, shop or even for study, particularly when they reach adolescence. Administration of the family thus greatly depends on the men. Prolonged absences of men from the village can adversely affect the family in many ways, including cultivation of agricultural land, children's education, and harmonious living. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that villagers are more likely to commute rather than migrate if they can find suitable off-farm work in reasonably close proximity to their homes.

Another important reason for opting for commuting rather than migration is the poor economic condition of village people. A large number of rural dwellers, especially labourers, small traders and poor peasants are, in fact, living from hand to mouth. They earn their daily livelihood mostly from off-farm sources through short-distance commuting, although some of them, in addition to off-farm income, derive some income from

local agricultural sources. Commuting provides an avenue through which the poor can cross their village boundary in the morning in search of work and come back in the latter part of the day with some cash or food essential for the daily livelihood of their families.

As they are almost entirely dependent upon a daily income, this group of poverty stricken commuters is virtually unable to migrate. They cannot cover the initial cost of migration which not only includes the movers' transport and maintenance costs at the destination place, but also includes a large sum of money required for families remaining in the village for at least a few weeks until the migrants will be able to remit money or goods to their families. This type of 'poverty-trap' is one of the fundamental reasons for the rapid rise of commuting in rural areas in Bangladesh.

Advantages and disadvantages

To gain a more comprehensive picture of the causes of commuting respondents were also asked about advantages and disadvantages of moving to and from their villages. In Table 6.14 their responses are grouped into a few broad categories. The statements in favour of commuting reflect three main points. First, it is evident that through commuting, villagers from different walks of life are able to improve their incomes by taking advantage of earning from two or more sources. Second, the opportunity of earning cash through the process of commuting, attracts a wide range of villagers

Table 6.13

Stated Reasons for Commuting Instead of Migration

Major reasons	Rampal n 40		Chandina n 40		Sakhipur n 40		All Areas n 120	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
To look after grehasti and family	17	31	35	80	29	63	81	56
Because of hand to mouth living	21	38	6	14	15	33	42	29
Commuting is less costly and risky than migration	7	13	3	7	2	4	12	8
Town (destination) is close to home	10	18					10	7
Total	55	100	44	100	46	100	145	100

Table 6.14

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages of Commuting from Villages

	Rampal n 40		Chandina n 40		Sakhipur n 40		All Areas n 120	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Advantages								
Advantage of earning more through farm and off-farm employment together	26	65	13	32	31	77	70	58
Cash earning opportunities	8	20	21	52	3	7	32	27
Provides alternatives for those who dislike farming	3	7	4	10	6	15	13	11
Others	3	7	2	5			5	4
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100
Disadvantages								
Hard labour	7	17	9	22	5	13	21	18
Disruption to commuting through harsh weather	10	25	3	7	10	25	23	19
Under employment/wage and irregular demand of work	4	10	8	20	3	7	15	13
No disadvantage at all	12	30	15	37	14	35	41	34
Slow and tedious transport	3	7	5	13	2	5	10	8
Others	4	10			6	15	10	8
Total	40	100	40	100	40	100	120	100

from different socio-economic and occupational backgrounds. Contemporary villagers are increasingly interested in earning cash in addition to farm income which is largely obtained as kind.

There are many reasons behind this trend. In Rampal and Chandina, for example, acute shortage of land on the one hand, and the introduction of new farm technology on the other, are the major reasons for the rising demand for cash. With the introduction of high yielding varieties in agriculture farmers need a large amount of cash to buy the necessary inputs. They usually collect money in different ways and the most important method is earning cash through the processes of commuting and circular migration. The traditional farming system in Sakhipur does not require large cash inputs into farming. Here, the villagers' main interest in earning cash through commuting relates to the shortage of land as well as poor return from agricultural activities.

Another advantage of commuting, reported mainly by those from the upper socio-economic ranks, is that commuting provides an alternative living particularly for those who want to live close to their village families and do not want to touch farm-dust. Commuters who aspire to such a life style, prefer to be white-collar workers, teachers or established (non-pedlar) businessmen. They accomplish their family farm work (grehasti) mostly with the help of hired labour.

It is apparent from Table 6.14 that the list of disadvantages is not as great as that for advantages. One-third of the commuters in each study area did not perceive any disadvantage arising from commuting. The rest have reported some of the inconveniences of commuting, such as weather disturbance, hard work, slow and tedious transport and uncertainty of getting regular work. In practice, commuting is not seen to be disadvantageous to rural society and economy.

Continuity through change

Generally the village people are poor, conservative and firmly attached to their families and place of birth. When a family wants to send one of its members to work elsewhere, it always considers both the economic and non-economic requirements of the family. The latter factor (i.e. non-economic) is particularly significant in non-western societies (Chapman 1970, 234). Commuting as a type of non-residential movment does not involve absence for a lengthy period from family and village; it is a compromise between total immobility and migration (cyclical or permanent relocation).

The major significance of commuting in the rural life in Bangladesh is that it enables villagers to live in familiar social and environmental settings. A wide range of villagers from different socio-economic and occupational backgrounds consider commuting as a mode of living which satisfies their objectives.

The significance of commuting and its proliferation as a form of mobility are evident in many societies within the Third World (Chapman 1970; Hugo 1978a; Bedford 1973; Maude 1981; Singhanetra-Renard 1981). Given the large volume of commuters in Third World countries, researchers now believe that with the development of infrastructure and new modes of production, commuting is becoming a substitute for migration.

6.4 SUMMARY

This chapter has analysed the age, education and occupation characteristics of commuters and circular migrants and their reasons for movement. The major findings derived from the data can be summed up as follows:

1. The age structures of commuters and migrants are different. Commuters are mainly selected from the young, middle aged and old aged villagers, while the migrants have largely come from the young adult ages.
2. In almost all age groups the propensity to commute for work seems to be higher than the propensity to migrate. After age 40, the gap between the commuting rate and migration rate appears to widen significantly.
3. At different stages of life the duration of the mobile and immobile working periods varies quite

significantly among the different age groups. Compared with the older generation people, the younger generation has spent or is spending more time in working away from their home village.

4. It appears that circular migrants are better educated than those who have never moved out of their native place or have mostly remained at the village of their origin. Commuters have a higher level of education than non-movers and seasonal migrants, but a markedly lower level than circular migrants. It was also found that the propensity to migrate appears to be high, especially among the higher educated males.
5. There is a marked variation in educational attainment between rural and urban movers. In general the propensity to move to towns increases with the rise in education level.
6. As with the education level, the nature of occupation of movers and non-movers differs widely. Non-movers are predominantly involved in agricultural activities; commuters mostly travel for trade/business or earning off-farm wages while circular migrants leave their villages for salaried jobs and services. Seasonal migrants, on the other hand, are concentrated in certain types of wage earning occupations.
7. Unlike other types of movers and non-movers, the commuters tend to have two occupations, one off-

farm and the other on-farm. The latter is in most cases regarded as a secondary occupation.

8. It is evident that in the rural areas a structural change from the agricultural base to a non-agricultural base to household economic activity has been evolving through the pocess of circular movements. Increased pressure of population on land is accelerating this process.

9. Inquiry into the villagers' motives for commuting and circular migration revealed that unskilled and low-income people are more likely to commute than the skilled and better-off villagers who prefer migration. Commuting is a form of mobility which enables those villagers in the lower socio-economic classes to take advantage of a range of economic opportunities while migration is more suited to maximizing opportunity for those in the higher socio-economic strata. This relationship between socio-economic status and mobility behaviour is examined in depth in Chapter 8.

10. The most common reason for commuting is that it enables village dwellers to work both on and off their farms - a dual occupation strategy which has become widespread through rural regions in Bangladesh. Commuting is a viable alternative to migration, especially among the poor farmers, part-time farmers, agricultural labourers and families with fewer income earners.

11. The crucial factor for seeking outside employment through commuting or seasonal migration is poverty which operates via a range of variables such as education level, availability of land, family size, and household income. The next chapter explores several demographic, social and economic attributes of the households and families within which the commuters and circular migrants are based.

CHAPTER 7

HOUSEHOLD BACKGROUND OF COMMUTERS AND CIRCULAR MIGRANTS

In this chapter selected demographic and socio-economic attributes of commuter and circular migrant households are examined with a view to establishing the significance of household variables in discriminating between different groups of movers. The variables discussed here are household size and composition, land ownership patterns, tenural status, and income levels and sources. Households are classified by mobility status (circular migrant, commuter, stayer etc.) on the basis of the present mobility behaviour of economically active members. A household with two different types of movers, for example, a commuter and a circular migrant was counted twice, once as commuter household and then as circular migrant household. The number of families which contained more than one type of active movers was 124; they accounted only 6 percent of the total (1941) households or 10 percent of all (1212) active mover families as shown in Table 3.9. In the case of stayer households, the study examined only those families which had no ever moved members.

7.1 HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND COMPOSITION

The propensity to move and the selection of a particular mobility strategy by a potential mover greatly depends on the demographic circumstances of the

mover's family or household. Reviews of migration studies in Third World countries (Connell et al. 1976; De Jong and Gardner 1981) indicate that certain aspects of the family such as size, composition, and life-cycle stage etc. have substantial influences upon the migration decision-making process. Despite general recognition of this, there has been a lack of research concerning the impact of household factors on the processes of commuting, seasonal migration and the practice of immobility.

7.1.1 Household size

It appears from Table 7.1 that household size in rural areas varies significantly between mover and stayer families as well as between different types of mover families. Circular migrants have come from big families in comparison with commuters, seasonal migrants and stayers. On average, a household having an active circular migrant recorded 7.71 members, while the mean sizes of a commuter, a seasonal migrant and a stayer household were 6.65, 6.32 and 5.43 members respectively.

Nearly a fifth of the circular migrant households (82 out of 476) had more than 10 members per household. The corresponding proportions of households with more than 10 members among the commuters, seasonal migrants and stayers households were 9, 8 and 3 percent respectively (Table 7.1). At the other end of the scale there were only 35 circular migrants (7 percent) whose family size varied from 2 to 3 members. Among the

Table 7.1

Household Size for Movers, Stayers and All Households, 1981.

Persons	Stayer HHs[1]		Active Commuter HHs		Active Circular Migrant HHs		Active Seasonal Migrant HHs		Returnee HHs (Ex CM)		All active mover HHs[2]		All Households	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1 - 2	59	14	36	5	11	2	8	5	1	-	55	4	120	6
3 - 4	104	25	138	20	67	14	41	28	33	20	246	19	405	21
5 - 6	113	27	189	27	122	26	43	29	37	22	354	27	567	29
7 - 8	95	23	176	25	112	24	31	21	51	31	319	24	478	25
9 - 10	35	8	94	14	82	17	14	9	23	14	190	14	219	11
11+	12	3	60	9	82	17	12	8	22	13	154	12	152	8
Total	418	100	693	100	476	100	149	100	167	100	1318	100	1941	100
Average size	5.43		6.65		7.71		6.32		7.24		7.00		6.38	

1 Includes households (HH) having no ever-moved member.
2 All active commuters, circular migrants (CMs) and seasonal migrants (SMs).

circular migrants single-person households were not found in any of the study areas in Bangladesh.

A positive relationship

The relationship between family size and propensity to move, in general, suggests that movers from rural areas tend to come from relatively large households. In other words, the propensity to move for work is positively associated with family size (Table 7.1). Several explanations of this relationship are possible.

In rural areas, there has been an increase in the number of households which, in the face of diminishing opportunities to own or rent land, have extended their economic activities into a wide range of non-agricultural pursuits. In this context, the large families have an advantage over small households as the former have more economically active members and can easily spare one or more members for earning incomes off their farms through migration.

Connell and his co-authors (1976, 45) pointed out that through townward migration, big families were able to reduce the risk of unpredictable farm income and to diversify their "family economic portfolio". Caldwell (quoted by Connell et al. 1976, 45) introduced another sort of risk that a migrant might abandon his parents in their old age and thus parents having a small number of children discourage their children from migrating to town.

Family size and economic condition

To gain a better perspective on the relationship between family size and the mobility process, further details of the families' economic and mobility strategies are necessary. From data collected in the field it is apparent that family size is directly related to its economic condition (Table 7.2). In the rural areas, large families tend to be better off while smaller families are found to be relatively poor. This relationship has been found in the case of mover as well as stayer households. Within the same economic category the family size of movers is higher than that of stayers.

In theory, it is hard to believe the above statements, because it is often argued that poor, illiterate peasants/ labourers have larger families than the better educated and more well off. This study cannot produce enough field and documentary evidence evidence to conclusively prove these propositions but the following account by Paul Harrison (1981, 253) is useful in the cotext of the changing rural situation in Bangladesh:

> In Bangladesh, surveys have found that the less land a man owns, the more likely his wife is to know about, approve of and practise family planning. Farmers of more than two acres ... were determined to have as many sons as they needed to work their land without hired labour ... at the critical size of holding that a man can work alone - about one and a half acres - and below, there was a noticeable desire for small families. But what of the theory that the landless and near-landless also want extra sons to bring in extra wages? This too begins

Table 7.2

Average Family Size of Mover and Stayer Households by Income Categories

Income (taka/year)	Stayer households (N 418)	Active commuter households (N 693)	Active CM households (N 476)	Active SM households (N 149)	All households (N 1941)
Up to 500	1.54	-	-	-	1.54
1500	2.16	-	2.5	-	2.16
2500	3.15	5.00	3.67	3.00	3.66
5000	4.43	4.03	4.67	4.56	4.54
7500	5.37	4.79	5.29	5.29	5.21
10000	6.28	5.32	5.88	6.33	5.68
15000	6.36	6.62	6.53	7.31	6.61
20000	7.53	7.53	8.00	9.46	7.66
25000	7.78	8.48	8.91	8.83	8.12
over 25000	9.25	10.24	10.35	13.30	9.83
Average HH size	5.43	6.65	7.71	6.32	6.38

N nos. of households.

> to be inoperable as poverty really bites ... it has been calculated that a male child begins from the age of twelve to repay the cost of rearing him. By the time he is sixteen, he will have repaid that cost in full, and by the time he is twenty, he will have earned enough to cover the cost of rearing another child. Now the decline in real wages produced by the labour surplus tends to lengthen the time needed for a child to repay its cost - if real wages halve, repayment time doubles. More critically still, increasing poverty has led to a situation where the poorest openly admit that while they might like to have more sons, they simply cannot afford to rear them up to the age when they will begin to earn money.

Poverty and family limitation

The norm for small families among the poor and non-landowning class is not a desired one: rather it is the outcome of general poverty and scarcity of farm employment in the rural areas. In another recent study in Bangladesh, Van Schendel (1981, 241-42) found that household size was related to economic position: the richer the household, the larger its size. The much lower household sizes among the poor did not always point to much lower fertility among them, but often to a less complicated household structure. Rich households were generally larger and more complex in terms of their soial structures than poorer ones. In addition to this view both Cain (1978) and Attood (1978) found that poor families generate fewer surviving children than rich ones.

Everywhere in Bangladesh there is heavy competition for employment. But the situation seems to be worst in the rural areas and in the agricultural

sector in particular. As the poor families cannot afford to bear the cost of modern education or training for their sons, they find it much harder to send their sons to town for a job. So, the only option open to them is reduction in numbers of household members and, surprisingly, they were found to do that in various ways: (i) controlling births; (ii) early-marriage of their daughters; (iii) separating those sons who are not willing or able to help parents i.e. insisting sons to live isolate from their parents' household; (iv) abandoning old parents; and (v) letting children stay with other families (relatives or non-relatives).

Benefits of large families

In contrast to the above situation, having a large family brings private benefits to the well-off and better educated households. These families can afford to train up their children in accordance with the demand and prospect of jobs, and they can wait for a long time until their sons become adults and start to receive a good income through migration to towns and cities. Here Harrison (1981, 226) puts forward another relevant comment:

> In most places [within the Third World countries] it still costs less to raise an extra child than the potential gain from his labour, his marriage alliance, or his support in old age. It is a profitable venture; it brings in a worthwhile return for the investment.

In brief, large families, as they are better off and have extra manpower can update their skills to keep pace

with recent occupational changes brought about by the stream of rural-urban movement.

7.1.2 Household composition

Extended and nuclear families

The context of family structure or composition is another important demographic dimension to family size which influences mobility strategies. As migrants tend to come from larger families, joint and extended families are more likely to promote migration. Out of 96 extended families, 55 (57 percent) have at least one active circular migrant (Tables 7.3 and 7.4).

In the case of simple nuclear families, only 19 percent were able to spare a member for any lengthy absence in employment elsewhere (Table 7.4). Table 7.3 indicates that the proportion of migrants coming from nuclear families is significantly lower than the proportions of commuters and non-movers. Thus, the propensity for households to have migrant members increases with the successive expansion of family structure.

In many Third World countries (including Bangladesh), the impact of socio-religious restrictions against participation in women's outdoor work results in male dominance in occupational mobility. It also limits long-term migration of male members, especially from nuclear families where normally a household has one male bread-winner who cannot be absent for long periods In such a situation, it was found that male movers from

Table 7.3

Household Composition of Movers, Stayers and All Households, 1981.

Household composition	Stayer HHs		Active commuter HHs		Active CM HHs		Active SM HHs		Returnee HHs		All active mover HHs		All households	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Simple nuclear family: spouse and unmarried children	258	62	399	58	215	45	77	52	78	47	691	52	1110	57
2. Nuclear family plus spouse's parents	44	11	78	11	38	8	17	11	19	11	133	10	211	11
3. Nuclear family plus married children	12	3	34	5	27	6	4	3	10	6	65	5	75	4
4. Joint family: type 2 and 3	70	17	129	19	140	29	41	27	40	24	310	24	406	21
5. Extended family	7	2	44	6	55	12	6	4	20	12	105	8	96	5
6. Others[1]	27	6	9	1	1	-	4	3	0	-	14	1	43	2
Total	418	100	693	100	476	100	149	100	167	100	1318	100	1941	100

1 Including 33 single person households.

Table 7.4

Distribution of Active Movers and Stayers by Household Composition

(percentages)

Household composition	Stayer[1] HHs	Active commuter HHs	Active CM HHs	Active SM HHs	All house-holds
1. Simple nuclear family: spouse and unmarried children	23	36	19	7	100
2. Nuclear family plus spouse's parents	21	37	18	8	100
3. Nuclear family plus married children	16	45	36	5	100
4. Joint family: type 2 and 3	17	32	34	10	100
5. Extended family	7	46	57	6	100
6. Other Types	63	21	-	9	100
Total	22	36	24	8	100

1 Includes only those stayers whose households had no ever moved member.

nuclear families largely prefer short-term movements such as commuting and seasonal migration. A similar situation exists in Northern Nigeria, where Goddard (1973, cited in Connell et al. 1976, 48) found that males from nuclear families were limiting their movements to short-term seasonal circulation, because of social restrictions against women working outdoors.

Birth order and mobility

Connell and his colleagues (1976, 46) indicated that birth order and the number of sons in the family are often very important in determining who migrates. Farmers in Punjab, India (Wyon and Gordon, 1971) and in Sri Lanka said to field investigators that usually the younger sons were given preference for a better education and migration over the elder. A similar situation also exists in Bangladesh. Of the 93 sample migrants, only 6 (7 percent) had no brother; the majority (53 percent) were younger sons while the remaining 40 percent were elder brothers. For the 120 sample commuters the relevant proportions for these birth orders were 18, 50 and 32 percent respectively. Stayers have yet another birth order pattern. They were less likely to come from the younger sons.

The most striking difference between the migrants and the stayers is that a large proportion of the stayers (25 percent) came from single-son families. In a society where sons customarily have the responsibility of taking care of their father's property along with

looking after aged parents, it is often inconvenient for a man who has no brother to make a migratory move. On the other hand, fathers having only one son are also less likely to move than those who have more than one son.

This finding emerged from a cross-inquiry of the mobility behaviour of fathers of all people in all the samples (i.e. stayers, commuters, circular migrants and returnees altogether). It was found that among those fathers who had one son, 35 percent were movers and the remaining 65 percent had never made any movement for livelihood. The proportions of movers and stayers among those who had more than one son were recorded as 53 and 47 percent respectively.

The propensity to mobility or immobility among the fathers of one son families or several-sons families, varies from one sample group to another. The lowest propensity to movement was found for the stayers sample and the highest propensity was recorded in the case of the circular migrant sample. This indicates that the father's mobility status, to a great extent, determines the son's mobility behaviour. It was also found that the mobility strategies of elder sons have a substantial influence on the movement attitudes of their younger brothers.

7.2 LAND OWNERSHIP PATTERNS

In rural Bangladesh land is the resource which

provides employment or income, though not equally and adequately, to almost all rural households. The amount of land a household owns reflects to a large degree the household's economic, social and strategic position (Jansen, 1983, 291). Every family, whether poor or rich is found to compete for this scarce resource.

Given the high degree of overcrowding in agricultural land and its resulting unequal distribution, most of the families in the countryside are nowadays seeking additional employment off the farm. This has resulted in a pattern of circular movement where both land-poor and land-surplus families are sending their male earning members to cities, towns and a wide range of rural places for work. The poverty of the land-poor forces them to move in search of off-farm work, while the land-surplus families invest their agricultural surplus in migratory occupations.

In such a situation, the explanation of an individual's mobility behaviour requires insight into his landholding position (the amount of land owned/ operated by his household) and tenural status (his or his family's relationship with land). In this section, land ownership patterns of the movers are examined. Tenure status is discussed further in the following section.

7.2.1 Land distribution

The propensity to migrate from rural areas for non-agricultural work in towns is attributed to

considerable degree to patterns of land ownership. A number of studies have established that the scarcity of land, landlessness and skewness in land distribution are common features of villages where migration is common in many densely settled agrarian societies in Asia (Connell et al. 1976, Chaudhury 1978a, Lipton 1980). In other words, there is a positive relationship between high man/land ratios and a propensity to rural emigration.

Lorenz curves and Gini coefficients

Bangladesh has one of the most unequal distributions of land in a situation characterised by firstly an extremely small per capita arable land (0.23 acres), secondly a rapid increase of population, and thirdly the process of land alienation from small to big landowners. A recent study commissioned by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) revealed that fewer than 10 percent of Bangladesh's rural households own over half the country's cultivable land (Jannuzi and Peach 1979). Meanwhile 60 percent of rural families own less than 10 percent of the land. Almost one-third own no cultivable land at all.

Inquiry in Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur produced very similar statistics on land distribution. The top decile group of households has acquired three-fifths (61 percent) of the total farm land (Table 7.5). Almost one-third of households are absolutely landless and another one-third which have some land, account for less

Table 7.5

Percentage Share of Total Agricultural Land by Decile Groups of Households, 1981.

Decile groups	All households (N 1941)	Stayer households[1] (N 418)	Female headed households (N 64)	Current mover households[2]			Ex mover households[2]		
				Commuters (N 693)	Circular migrants (N 476)	Seasonal migrants (N 149)	Ex Commuters (N 235)	Ex-Circular migrants (N 167)	Ex-Seasonal migrants (N 108)
0 - 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10 - 20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.20	0.10	0
20 - 30	0.06	0.02	0	0	0.41	0	0.97	1.08	0.28
30 - 40	1.04	0.89	0	0.61	1.31	1.35	1.96	2.16	1.83
40 - 50	2.30	2.20	0	1.96	2.49	2.50	3.22	3.51	3.21
50 - 60	3.88	3.69	0	3.46	3.77	4.08	4.97	5.40	4.98
60 - 70	6.16	5.67	2.74	5.71	6.11	6.46	6.20	8.12	6.30
70 - 80	9.69	7.95	9.15	9.89	9.73	10.84	10.03	12.09	8.80
80 - 90	15.75	11.82	27.89	17.22	16.39	17.91	16.06	18.38	15.40
90 - 100	61.12	67.75	60.22	61.15	59.79	56.87	56.40	49.16	59.19
Per capita land*	0.21	0.29	0.06	0.14	0.24	0.22	0.26	0.23	0.18
Average land* (per household)	1.35	1.58	0.18	0.95	1.84	1.38	2.06	1.66	1.30
Gini coefficient	.756	.770	.816	.761	.743	.727	.703	.663	.725
% of landless households	28.00	28.70	62.50	32.61	21.63	30.20	14.46	16.76	25.00
% of near landless households[3]	26.84	23.92	23.43	31.31	26.89	22.81	24.25	24.55	25.00

* In acres (1 acre = 0.4046 hectares)
N Numbers of households.

1 Households having no ever moved member.
2 A household having two or more current or ex movers, counts once only (see Table 3.9).
3 Household owned up to 0.50 acre of farm land.

than 10 percent of the land available for cultivation.

The empirical patterns of landownership are demonstrated in Tables 7.5, 7.6, 7.7 and Figures 7.1 and 7.2. These show clearly that agricultural land is concentrated in the hands of a few families. The bulk of the land-share (57 to 68 percent) goes to the top decile group of households. Except for households headed by females, the concentration ratio in landownership as measured by the Gini coefficient[1] was found to vary between 0.669 to 0.770. This measure indicates a high degree of inequality in land distribution among both the stayer and mover households.

Circular migrant families have slightly less land-inequality in comparison with stayers and commuters. This is evident in Figure 7.1 which shows the Lorenz curves for the distribution of household landholdings. A comparison of graphs b, c and d clearly indicates that there has been some reduction of inequality among the migrants households. The Gini coefficient for the migrants' land-distribution was 0.743, a ratio of land concentration which was slightly lower than the ratios of 0.761 and 0.770 measured for commuters and stayers respectively.

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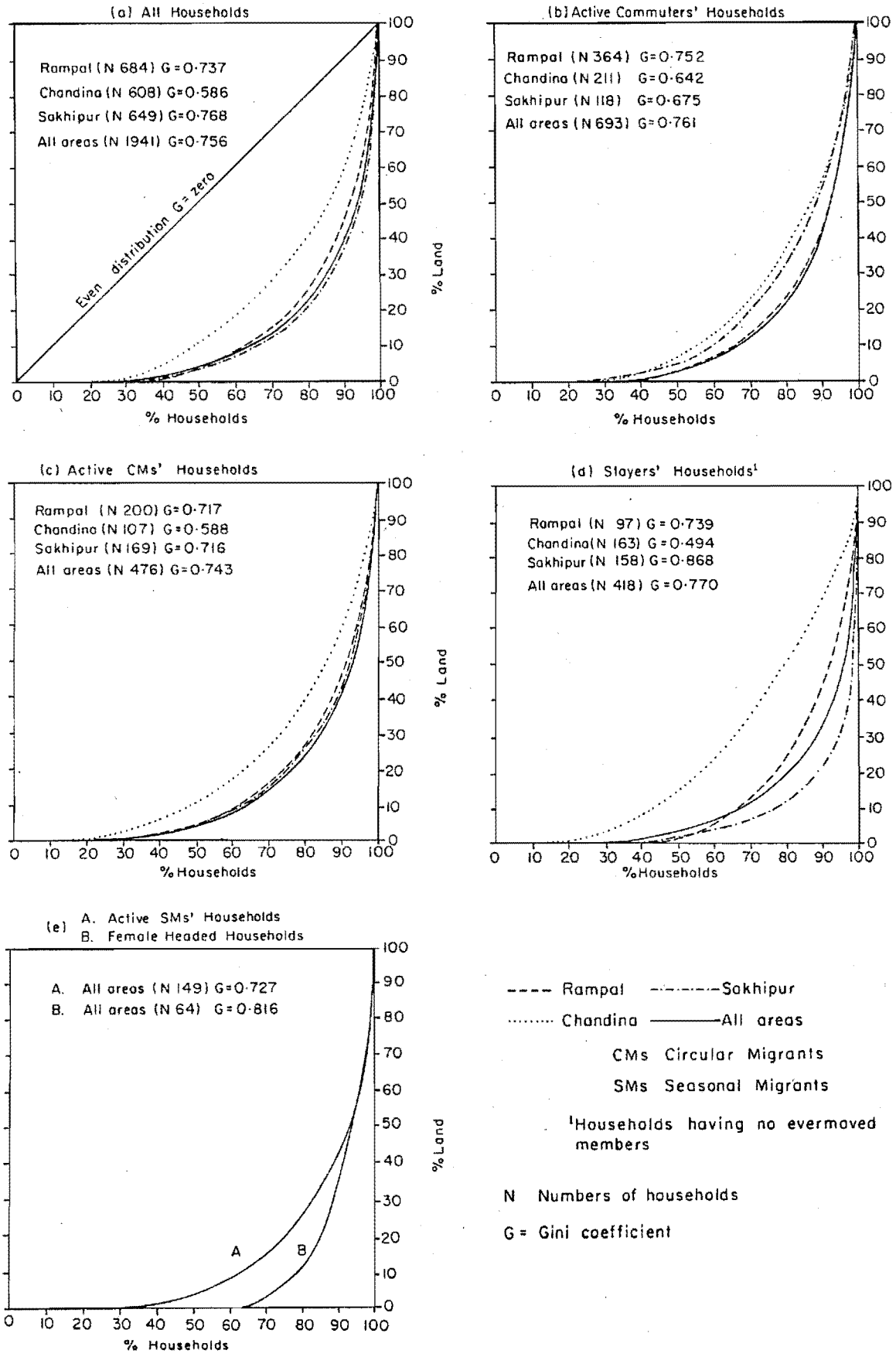
1 A measure of concentration of land (or income) derived from the Lorenz curve (Figure 7.1). The value of G (Gini coefficient) can vary between zero and one. A value of G = 0 represents perfect equality in distribution of land; whilst G = 1 means absolute inequality i.e. all land is owned by a single household. Generally the larger G is, the more unequal is the distribution.

Figure 7·1
LORENZ CURVES: HOUSEHOLD AGRICULTURAL LAND HOLDINGS



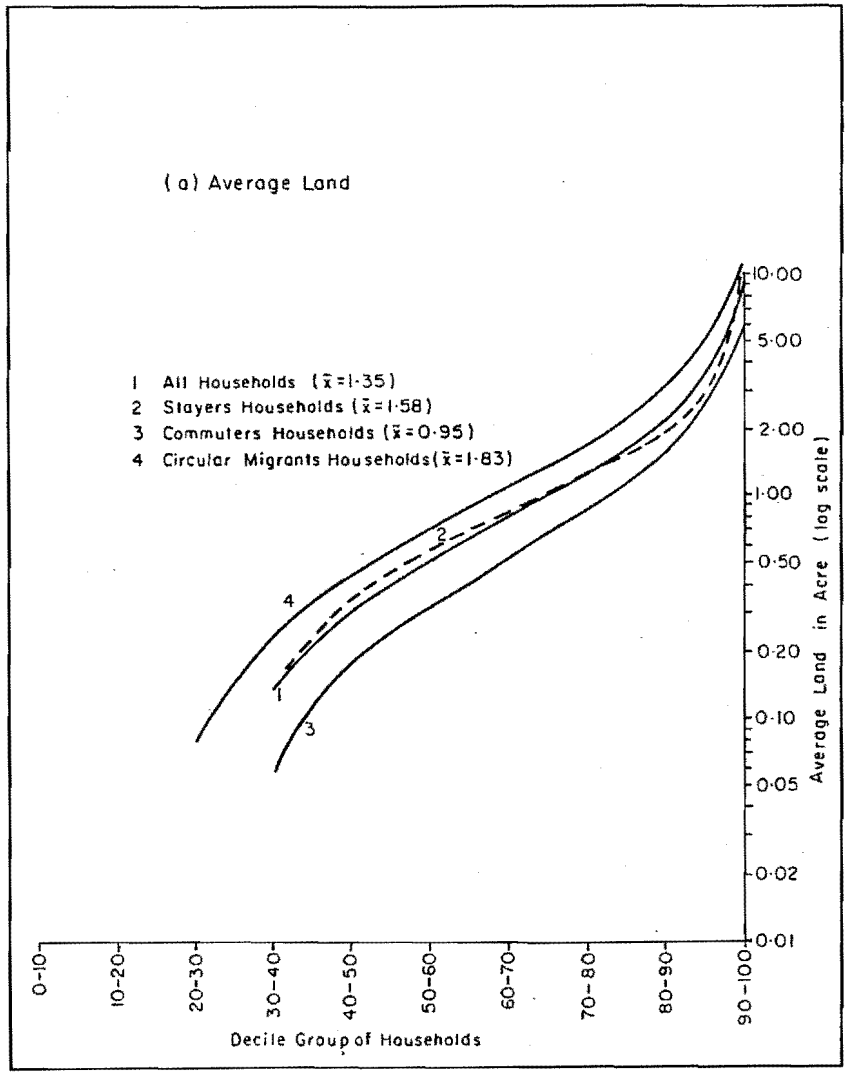
These findings are also reflected in Table 7.5 which gives the percentage share of land owned by each decile of households. At the lower end of the distribution (deciles third to fifth), the land shares are higher among the migrants than those among commuters and stayers. For example, the bottom 40 percent of migrants owned 1.72 percent of land as compared to 0.91 percent shared by stayers and 0.61 percent possessed by commuters. In the top 10 percent, the migrants' share of land was slightly lower than the shares of commuters and stayers. Furthermore, the reduction of land-inequality, to a considerable level, is contributed to by the lower rate of landlessness found among circular migrants (Table 7.6).

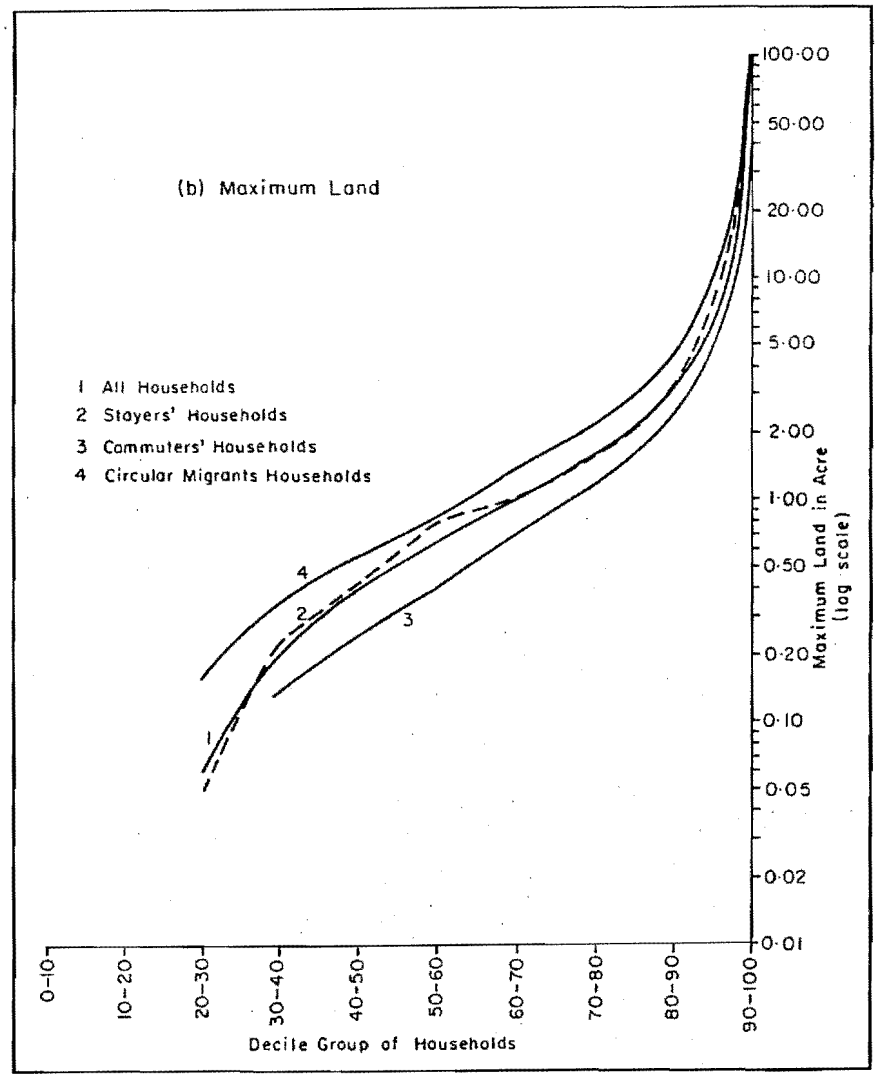
Land and migration

These findings lead us to the conclusion that a larger proportion of the circular migrant families have farm land, and the distribution of holdings among migrant families is less unequal than is found among other categories of mover. This is clearly evident from Figure 7.2 which shows that in each decile of households, a migrant has a significantly higher amount of land than a commuter and a stayer. For instance, in the fourth decile (decile group 30-40 percent) a migrant household owned, on average, 0.24 acres of land - four times as much as a commuter and almost twice as much as as a stayer (Figure 7.2a). In the subsequent deciles, the discrepancy gradually narrowed.

Figure 7·2

AVERAGE AND MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF AGRICULTURAL LAND (PER HOUSEHOLD) FROM DECILE GROUP OF STAYERS, COMMUTERS, CIRCULAR MIGRANTS AND ALL HOUSEHOLDS





$\bar{x}$ indicates per household mean acre of land from all decile groups (see Table 7·5)

Some other important measures of land-distribution such as per capita land and average land-holdings per household, were also derived from survey data. It was found that migrants' families in each study location had better access to agricultural land than other mobility status families (Table 7.6). Another point that should be noted here is that even the returnees' households (households having ex-circular migrants) were found to control more land than the households of stayers, commuters and seasonal migrants.

The amount of land owned by circular migrants, and the level of inequality were found to vary from one location to another. A relatively lower level of land concentration (G = 0.588) was recorded among migrants from Chandina, for example, than for those from the other two areas. Sakhipur migrants distinguished themselves by holding larger amounts of land (per capita as well as per household) and having higher levels of inequality in terms of ownership of property. At Rampal station migrant households had very small land-holdings and a higher inequality rate (Table 7.6). The predominant reasons for the variations of land ownership patterns among the migrants in the three study areas are strongly related to the individual area's man/land ratio and the quality of land as well. When land distribution is related to migration rates (percentage of male migrants among all males of age 15 years and above) a widely mentioned hypothesis was supported which states

Table 7.6
Some Statistical Measures of Household Agricultural Landholdings by Study Area and Mobility Status Groups

Study area and mobility status	Per capita land *	Average land per HH *	Gini coefficient[1]	Percentage of Landless	
				Absolute Landless	Near Landless[2]
(a) Study area					
Rampal (N 684)	0.067	0.424	.737	34.94	42.10
Chandina (N 608)	0.173	1.141	.586	19.57	19.57
Sakhipur (N 649)	0.401	2.527	.768	28.65	17.56
All areas (N 1941)	0.211	1.352	.756	28.00	26.84
(b) Mobility status groups (in Rampal)					
Active CM HHs (N200)	0.088	0.667	.717	25.00	42.00
Active SM HHs (N 9)	0.042	0.313	.574	33.33	44.44
Active Commuter HHs (N 364)	0.061	0.392	.752	38.73	41.20
Returnee (Ex CM) HHs (N 63)	0.082	0.587	.621	19.04	47.61
Stayer HHs[3] (N 97)	0.061	0.329	.739	42.26	39.17
(c) Mobility status groups (in Chandina)					
Active CM HHs (n107)	0.200	1.651	.588	14.95	17.75
Active SM HHs (N 14)	0.296	2.834	.680	14.28	28.57
Active Commuter HHs (N 211)	0.141	0.969	.642	27.96	20.85
Returnee (Ex CM) HHs (N 56)	0.232	1.740	.484	10.71	8.92
Stayer HHs[3] (N 163)	0.176	1.00	.494	14.11	19.63
(d) Mobility status groups (in Sakhipur)					
Active CM HHs (N169)	0.442	3.340	.716	21.89	14.79
Active SM HHs (N126)	0.221	1.292	.718	31.74	20.63
Active Commuter HHs (N 118)	0.370	2.630	.675	22.03	19.49
Returnee (Ex CM) HHs (N 48)	0.418	2.970	.676	20.83	12.50
Stayer HHs[3] (N 158)	0.572	2.950	.868	35.44	19.00
(e) Mobility status groups (in All areas)					
Active CM HHs (n 476)	0.238	1.837	.743	21.63	26.89
Active SM HHs (N149)	0.219	1.378	.727	30.20	22.81
Active Commuter HHs (N 693)	0.142	0.949	.761	32.61	31.31
Returnee (Ex CM) HHs (N 167)	0.228	1.659	.663	16.76	24.55
Stayer HHs[3] (N 418)	0.291	1.584	.770	28.70	23.92

* in acres (1 acre = 0.4046 hectares)
1 See text section 7.2.1
2 Household owned up to 0.50 acres of farm land.
3 Households having no ever moved members.

CM Circular Migrant
SM Seasonal Migrant
HH Household
N Numbers of households

that the high migration rate from a rural area is associated with relatively higher levels of land-inequality among the households of that area (Lipton 1980, 4; Connell et al. 1976, 10; Chaudhury 1978a). The migration rates for Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur were found to be 21, 12 and 19 percent respectively. The corresponding figures for land-inequality measured by Gini coefficient were recorded as 0.737, 0.586 and 0.768 (Table 7.6).

Inequality and pauperism

The level of land-inequality greatly depends on the intensity and prolongation of the processes of land alienation and pauperism, both of which are again influenced by the process of rural emigration. In the rural areas the economic benefit of emigration often partly or fully removes the risks of losing land and it thereby pushes down the inequality rate among the migrants. However, as land is a very scarce and essential resource in Bangladesh, people try to hold on to it as long as possible (Alangir 1978, 105). Land is only disposed of by selling or mortgaging if the farmers cannot find any alternative way of providing a livelihood for a long period. In this context, Harrison (1981, 87) rightly recounts:

> in Bangladesh ... the owner [of a small holding] becomes increasingly vulnerable. If he cannot find enough outside work - or if disease or disaster strike - he will have to mortgage his land for a loan and risk forfeiture, or sell it off bit by bit to buy

> a temporary respite, ensuring short-term survival at the risk of long-term ruin.

In these circumstances, the migration process provides an alternative strategy for survival.

While discussing the massive indebtedness in Indian agriculture (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), Davis (1951, 210) rightly pointed out quoting Mukhtyar (1930, 247-49) that a good proportion of the debt-free families are, in fact, migratory. Among the migrants of all study areas, the proportions of land-paupers were found to be comparatively low (Table 7.6). This result, obviously, indicates that a large number of migrant families originating from the small landowning class are trying to avoid land selling or mortgaging and in turn they are adopting a migration strategy for maintaining their livelihood.

7.2.2 Attributes of land owners

In the competition for acquiring land, circular migrants appeared to be the winners against the other competitors such as commuters, stayers and seasonal migrants. In all deciles of households, they (migrants) owned significantly higher amounts of land than others (Figure 7.2). There are several socio-economic attributes (e.g. educational attainment, family size and composition, occupation, and income level) which favour the migrants in acquiring more land. The concentration of income may help the concentration of land holdings and the two phenomena may reinforce each

other. Family size and composition are also intimately connected to land acquisition.

In India, Attwood (1978, 5) stated, quoting Mandelbaum (1970, 47-54), that wealthier families have more surviving sons and they tend to remain in large joint families for long periods. A parallel finding by Cain (1978) from villages in Mymensingh district in Bangladesh indicated that poor families generate fewer surviving children and those households break down (due to sons' departure from their fathers' home) much earlier than rich families. He found that the mean age of sons at the time they leave their fathers' home is greater (28.5 years) among large landowning families than among landless peasants (22.3 years).

Regarding household composition, Jansen (1983, 58) put his comment in this way - "... the more land a household owns the more complex is its composition". In the preceding section the migrants households were found to be predominantly more complex than other groups of movers as well as stayers. Considering all these findings it can now be concluded that migrants have more opportunities to reap rural income (mostly from land) as well as urban income (through migration) and in doing so, they can save more money which in turn is often invested in land procurement.

Owned and operated land

The variable of land is further analysed in Table 7.7 where data on owned land and operated land are

compared. The results clearly indicated that the migrants usually rent out a large proportion of their land to tenant farmers. As a result, among the migrants the amounts of operated land (per capita or per household) were found to be much lower than the amounts obtained for any other samples.

Due to the absence of migrants, their households generally have a shortage of village-based male manpower required for the operation of all the family's farm land. In such a situation, most of the migrant families rent out at least part of their land. Data also shows (Table 7.7) that among the landowning households the proportion of non-cultivator families was highest among the migrants (28 percent) and lowest among the stayers (4 percent).

The case of commuters

It is evident from the analysis of land data that the position of commuters in terms of their landholdings is quite different to that for circular migrants. Such a pattern can easily be understood in the light of comparative socio-economic status. The most important factor which indirectly caused an imbalance in land distribution between the commuters and the migrants was the difference in educational attainment. Higher proportions of illiterate and nominally literate persons were found among commuters, and most were employed in low income occupations such as pedlar trades and wage labour. As a result, commuters were generally not

Table 7.7

Characteristics of Agricultural Landholdings by Mover/Stayer Samples[1], 1981

Characteristics	Sample			
	Stayers	Commuters	Circular Migrants	Returnees
Total land owned N	120	116	80	94
Per household (in acres)	2.24	1.61	2.03	1.66
Per capita (in acres)	0.32	0.24	0.26	0.22
Percent landless	17	22	7	18
Gini coefficient	0.772	0.787	0.626	0.622
Coefficient of variation (%)	376	254	163	131
Net operated land N	120	116	80	94
Per household	1.67	1.17	1.05	1.42
Per capita	0.24	0.18	0.13	0.19
Percent operated no land	16	24	32	19
Gini coefficient	0.632	0.656	0.661	0.599
Coefficient of variation	159	138	140	120
Total operated land[2] N	120	116	80	94
Per household	3.48	2.44	2.29	3.10
Gini coefficient	0.622	0.627	0.683	0.621
Coefficient of variation	154	132	139	130
Net own cultivated land N	100	91	74	77
Per household	1.83	1.12	1.00	1.42
Per capita	0.26	0.17	0.12	0.18
Percent not cultivated own[3]	4	14	28	16
Gini coefficient	0.661	0.660	0.651	0.578
Coefficient of variation	213	146	137	116

N Number of samples.

1 There were a total of 431 individuals in the samples of whom 410 are analysed here. One individual per household defines the mobility status of the household. The remaining 21 (4 commuters, 13 circular migrants and 4 returnees) were screened out because they belonged to 10 households instead of 21.
2 Total amount of land operated (cultivated) in different agricultural seasons per year.
3 Those who owned land but were non-cultivators.

economically in a position to win in the competition with migrants for land acquisition. Furthermore, the difference of holding size between commuters and migrants was partly caused by the differential patterns of their family size and structure.

A comparative analysis of land owned or operated[2] shown in Table 7.7 indicates that although commuter households possess smaller amounts of land than migrant families, the former households operate more land than the latter. In the previous chapter it was shown that, unlike migrants, most commuters were involved in farm activities. The following section will explain why circular migrant families were far less interested in self-operated farming than commuters and stayers.

Large households

Further analysis of land data revealed some interesting aspects of the household land operation and mobility strategies undertaken by the large joint families. It was found that these families, in most cases, have a sizeable area of land and several earners, and they carefully utilize their manpower in such a way that these families can earn an income simultaneously from land, commuting and migration.

In Table 7.7 (see footnote 1) the study excluded 21 samples of which 13 were circular migrants who originated from 10 households. These households were

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2 Land cultivated by family members and/or hired labourers.

relatively large and had several earners including at least two different types of working movers. On average, these households owned 8.8 acres of land of which 6.0 acres were operated by those families.

If these 13 cases (10 households) had been included in the analysis done for Table 7.7, the average amount of owned land, operated land and own cultivated land by the migrants would be 2.69, 1.54 and 1.53 acres (per household) instead of 2.0, 1.05 and 1.00 acres respectively (Table 7.7). This finding seems to be contradictory to our previous statement that circular migrants operate or cultivate smaller amounts of land than others. The reason for the anomaly is that those 10 households were not just circular migrant households; they contained several types of movers.

As a result of the highly skewed distribution of land patterns of landholdings often misrepresent the true picture of the majority of households. The analysis and interpretation of landholdings in the context of household composition and mobility strategies is a complex subject. It is very complex in the case of a minority of big households who possess large amounts of land and earn income from diverse sources. This complexity should be borne in mind in any analysis of the relationship between land ownership and household mobility strategies.

7.3 TENURAL STATUS

In Bangladesh the roots of rural emigration predominantly lie in the land; people in the rural areas depend in one way or another for their income or employment on agricultural activities (Jansen, 1983, 2). Income from agriculture can be obtained by owners of land, tenants, employees for landowners or a combination of these statuses. In rural Bangladesh there is yet another group of households who get no income from agricultural sources. These are the non-tenant, non-labour, landless families. The broad pattern of all these tenural arrangements and their variations among the different mobility status households is shown in Table 7.8.

7.3.1 'Gentlemen' farmers

The most striking feature of land tenancy among the circular migrants' families is that they are less likely to practise tenant farming but more likely to rent out land to the tenant farmers. Only 16 percent of circular migrants were tenant farmers (owner cum tenant plus pure tenant) compared with around 30 percent for stayers, commuters, and seasonal migrants (Table 7.8). Almost one-fifth (19 percent) of the migrants' households rented out their total land and nearly another one-fifth (17 percent) rented out part of their families holdings. In contrast to these figures, there

Table 7.8

Tenural Status of Movers, Stayers and All Households, 1981.

Tenural status	Stayer households		Active commuter households		Active CM households		Active SM households		Returnee households		Ex-commuter households		All village households	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Owner farmer	115	28	197	28	137	29	37	25	46	27	78	33	528	27
2. Owner cum tenant	93	22	155	22	62	13	37	25	38	23	65	28	402	21
3. Tenant only	24	6	44	6	13	3	12	8	8	5	16	7	112	6
4. Landless labour	50	12	95	14	38	8	29	19	15	9	11	5	239	12
5. Land lessor	23	5	31	5	90	19	11	7	13	8	5	2	162	8
6. Owner farmer plus land lessor	64	15	80	12	82	17	19	13	41	25	51	22	293	15
7. Non labour landless	45	11	87	13	52	11	4	3	5	3	7	3	192	10
8. Other types	4	1	4	1	2	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	13	1
Total	418	100	693	100	476	100	149	100	167	100	235	100	1941	100

was much less likelihood of other types of mover households and stayers renting out land.

In the preceding section it was pointed out that the circular migrants, unlike others, usually do not operate a large proportion of their owned land (almost half - see Table 7.7). Although it is not possible to produce any comparable data from other parts of the world, there exists a widely held view that there are many more 'gentlemen' farmers among migrants than among non-migrants.

Several reports published recently in and outside of Bangladesh (Hussain 1977, Van Schendel 1981, Jansens 1983, and Hartmann and Boyce 1983) have noted that the system of farming without touching farm dust, or farming through share-cropping arrangements or hired labour, is more profitable for those landowners who can utilize their family labour in more remunerative occupations. Obviously, this remark mostly referred to the landowning migrant families who, on one hand, sent their male earners to towns for higher incomes and, on the other hand, reaped the fruits of land by using cheap farm-labour and controlling the terms and conditions of sharecropping (the largest and most widely practised type of land tenure in Bangladesh).

Sharecropping

Although, in general, sharecroppers cultivate the

landlord's field on a fifty-fifty basis,[3] their net share is always smaller than that of the landlords. This is because they have to provide all inputs (except land) and sometimes have to take a loan to do this from landlords or money lenders. Very often this type of loan from non-institutional sources is linked to the condition of repayment in kind. This could be paddy at a post-harvest-period price so that the landlords or money-lenders can easily stock the crop at the cheapest price and then sell it to the market at a high margin of profit during the rest of the year.

If the crop of a sharecropper is damaged by floods, drought or pests, he might end up with an income that is even less than a farm labourer's earnings (Hartmann and Boyce 1983, 196). Demographic pressure, chronic shortage of land, and severe un/underemployment problems in the agricultural sector deter sharecroppers from revolting against these exploitative tenure arrangements. Under these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the sharecropping system facilitated the propensity of migration among the landowning families.

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3 Considerable variation in cost sharing practices was found between the areas under study. In all areas human labour and animal power, which constitute the major costs to sharecroppers, were borne by the tenant. Seed for traditional crops was mostly supplied by the landlord. Modern inputs such as chemical fertilizers, hybrid seeds (e.g. IRRI paddy, potato etc.) and irrigation were not used in Sakhipur but were found quite commonly in the other two areas. Generally, the landowner provides these inputs but deducts his costs from the gross harvest before output is shared.

In many cases, long time absentee landowners find sharecropping a convenient system for cultivating their land. They come to stay in the village, usually during the main harvest season, for a short period sufficient to collect their shares from sharecroppers.

Attitudes towards farming

The notion of a 'gentleman' farmer or farm supervisor also has to be considered in the context of the social attitude towards manual labour. Traditionally, work such as agricultural labour was considered an inferior means of livelihood and thus, if any family could afford to live without working for others, they would prefer to do so (Hussain 1977, 307). Generally, families with a better education level tend to avoid farm work and as a result a significant proportion of circular migrant households were found to depend on sharecroppers and agricultural labourers. In Table 7.9 a strong negative response among the migrants families to the notion of selling their labour for farm work is evident in comparison with other types of mover households.

Migrants as farmers

Despite the fact that a large proportion of migrant households (36 percent of all CMs or 46 percent of landowning CM households - see Table 7.8) were found to rent out land, many landowning families (294 out of 388 or 76 percent) still retained the title of farmer,

Table 7.9

Patterns of Agricultural Labour Utilization Among the Stayers, Movers and All Village Households, 1981

Labour utilization	Stayer households		Commuter households		Seasonal migrant households		Circular migrant households		All households	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
(a) Labour hire[1]										
Regular	41	14	64	13	16	15	66	22	208	16
Sometimes	188	63	290	61	40	38	178	61	802	60
Never	67	23	122	26	49	47	50	17	325	24
Total	296	100	476	100	105	100	294	100	1335	100
(b) Labour exchange (sell)										
Regular	98	24	41	6	70	47	41	9	319	16
Sometimes	105	25	181	26	40	27	50	10	429	22
Never	215	51	471	68	39	26	385	81	1193	62
Total	418	100	693	100	149	100	476	100	1941	100
(c) Family labour[1] use i.e. work in family's farm										
Regular	149	50	164	34	40	38	116	40	552	41
Sometimes	138	47	293	62	64	61	154	52	731	55
Never	9	3	19	4	1	1	24	8	52	4
Total	296	100	476	100	105	100	294	100	1335	100

1 Non-farmer households such as landless labourers/non-labourers and land lessors were excluded from the analysis.

either as owner-farmer, or as owner cum tenant, or as owner cum lessor. It is of interest to establish how these households carry out farming activities as well as being absent for lengthy periods.

There is no single answer or tactic which can explain this phenomenon. A number of variables were found which were deeply related to the combined operation of migration and farming. These were: household size, amount of land owned or under self-operation, socio-economic condition and, finally, the profitability of farming.

Bangladesh is a country of small scale agriculture and much of the produce comes from millions of mini peasant farms. Harrison (1981, 253) pointed out that the maximum landholding that a man can work alone in Bangladesh is one and a half acres (0.60 hectares). Less than one-third (29 percent) of the landowning CM households owned that much land. The proportion of such households actually operating that amount of land is lower still as a good proportion of landowning CMs (46 percent) had already rented out a substantial amount of their land. Table 7.7 also reveals that the amount of land under self-cultivation among the CM families was much smaller than other non-migrant families.

A close look at the evidence in Tables 7.7 and 7.8 suggests that the overwhelming majority of the CM families can practise farm activities and migration

together because they have been cultivating a very small quantity of land. Families having a relatively large farm-holding were found to cultivate only that much land which could be economically managed by their own family's labour and/or by hired labour. Very often large landowning households have a greater amount of manpower and they wisely employ part of it in the family's farm management, leaving the other part to earn off-farm incomes through migration.

How much land a migrant family can operate (or could operate in the future) under self-cultivation will depend, among other things, on its manpower, socio-economic condition and the profitability of farming. A number of recent studies (Jansen 1983, Hussain 1979) have claimed that sharecropping contracts have been shortening in recent years as compared to earlier times. The reasons for the shorter contracts, according to those studies, are the increased competition for sharecropping contracts and also the increased poverty of tenants as well as of small landowners.

7.3.2 Owner-operated tenancies

Contraction of sharecropping land obviously goes along with the expansion of land under self-cultivation. There are some logical reasons for the rise of owner-operated tenancy in Bangladesh. The most important reason is that when a land lessor household splits up, the newly established households will need all or a

large part of their plots of land for self-cultivation. The process of household-splitting reduces the landed property and thus, in turn, results in a deterioration of the socio-economic position of newly formed households. Once the latter process gets established, it is very difficult for the household to avoid so-called 'less prestigious work' such as farm occupation. Due to the process of socio-economic degradation, a large number of rural families (including migrant households) have recently been undertaking farm activities.

Another important reason which encourages the self-operated farming process is the higher rate of profit in land cultivation. Since the early 1970s, especially after the eruption of oil-prices, farming became very profitable due to high prices for agricultural products (Alamgir 1978, 110) on one hand and declining farm wages (in real terms) on the other. Moreover, with the diffusion of HYV technology, the profitability of land cultivation increased even more.

The provision of tax-free income in the farming sector was another incentive to cultivate land under owner operation. However, all these incentives and opportunities for making a good profit from cultivation are mostly suited to the land-rich households. As migrant families are better placed in terms of land occupancy, they also have bright prospects for earning land-based incomes.

Labour strategies

In the subsistence agriculture system, tilling of land is mostly done by the family's manpower, male, female or both. But in Bangladesh, due to socio-religious restrictions on female outdoor work, farm activities in the field are carried out almost entirely by males. As a result, households which lack active male members or fall short of male manpower (due to migration or if the household owns a large amount of land) are found either to hire male labour to do their farm work or to rent out land to tenant farmers. There is an abundant supply of cheap male labour in Bangladesh and the great majority of households usually hire farm labourers to supplement the family's male manpower (Table 7.9). Migrant families, obviously, were found to hire farm workers more frequently than other types of movers.

Households who owned more land also operated more land and they depended more on hired labour in addition to on the family's manpower. The nature of work done by the family's members depended mostly on socio-economic status; those who were from the apex of rural society, or close to it, were involved in farm supervision or sometimes gave a hand in light tasks. Others who could not afford to be conscious about so-called status, were engaged in all sorts of farm work.

Only the large joint families could spare male members for taking care of their farm regularly. For

example, the average household size of the 116 CM families (Table 7.9) who worked regularly on their farms was more than ten; four out of five families were joint or extended types. Meanwhile, part-time participation in self-operated farms seemed to be very common, especially among those households which did not have full-time resident males in the village. In such a situation, the migrants were found to plan their home visits to coincide with critical times in the agricultural calendar, such as land preparation, harvesting etc.

Leasing land

There were several other tactics for cultivating owner-operated farms. Sometimes economically better off households leased out part of their self-operated land just for a season or part of a season to those families that could provide enough family labour constantly for planting and nursing cauliflowers/ cabbages (in Rampal), potatoes (in Rampal and Chandina) and chilli plants (in Sakhipur). These are the most profitable farm products as well as the most labour-intensive crops found in those study areas. Furthermore, at the time when these crops are usually grown labour demand and wage rates both reach their peak levels.

The underlying motive behind this type of leasing (locally known as thika borga/niri borga) is to cut down huge labour costs simply by exploiting those lessee

families who normally get one-fourth (some cases even less) of the gross harvest against their unaccounted sweated labour.[4] Planning to grow cauliflowers, cabbages, and potatoes is very often a kind of short-term investment of a large sum of money[5] and only those families that have enough cash in hand, or have good relations with financing authorities in villages and towns can grow those crops profitably. In this case, land-rich CM households have a better chance because the migrants are already earning cash from towns, and they have better education which indirectly helps in finding loans (from various organizations in towns and in rural locations) for growing these profitable crops.

In Rampal and Chandina, another practice of land tenancy was observed among the farmer families. A few

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4 During field inquiries in Rampal and Chandina, intensive and extensive use of labour was observed particularly in potato fields and cauliflower/cabbage patches. The huge army of workers (hired or family members) participating in various stages of growing these vegetable crops included men of all ages, children and even some women from the lower socio-economic class. Sometimes at the busiest days of planting or harvesting of potatoes, it was found that the whole household, especially among the poor, moved to the field for work. In Rampal, irrigation by kalash (pitcher) was a common traditional method of watering cauliflower/cabbage gardens. Although the process is the easiest it requires a large amount of manpower: the pitcher is filled with water fom the nearest water sources (dobas/khals/ponds) and poured into the fields or plants after carrying (Bangladesh Geographical Society, 1961).

5 Other than the labour requirement, the productivity of these winter crops depends greatly on the amount of chemical fertilizer used, quality of seeds, and irrigation facilities. Growers often need a large amount of cash to buy these modern inputs.

households were found to lease out a part or all of their self-operated land on a fixed-rent basis, mostly for the winter season only. According to the contract between the two parties, the lessee family pays a certain amount of money in advance and it preferably grows some profitable crops. Apart from family maintenance, the lessor households (mostly migrant) invest that rent-money in some more profitable but less risky off-farm occupations, such as business in neighbouring markets or elsewhere, getting jobs or services in towns, or simply invest in children's education with a view towards a better future for the family.

When the contract season is over, the lessor household takes back its leased out land under self-cultivation for the rest of the seasons of the year during which times cultivation is much easier compared to the winter season. A point should be mentioned here that the practice of fixed-rent tenancy in Bangladesh has been found an insignificant system due to socio-religious restrictions. But some recent researchers (Jansen 1983; Hussain 1979), including the present one, indicate that the trend towards a fixed-rent tenancy system is slowly spreading through the social hierarchy due to increasing socio-economic depression and the diffusion of HYV technology.

The situation in Sakhipur

The amount of land owned or operated by migrant

and non-migrant households in Sakhipur villages was much higher (Table 7.7) than was found in the other two study areas. Here, a rich-landowning household depends heavily on its sharecroppers or on wage labourers. Households that usually operate a large amount of land under self-cultivation mostly accomplish their farm activities with the help of raiyots, a class of land-poor which for a long time has been attached to the tilling of land belonging to others, especially the big landlords.[6] In addition, farm wages in Sakhipur are among the cheapest in the country as the area has very limited opportunities for earning an alternative or additional living outside the farm.

Usually agricultural activities and wages in Sakhipur peak during mid-March to mid-May, when a huge quantity of labour is required for land preparation and

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6 When the British colonized India, they created a tenural system in Bengal where zamindars became the lawful owners of land. They would cultivate their lands with the help of a group of tenants - called raiyots. The zamindary system was abolished in 1950 but the term raiyot is still commonly used in and around Sakhipur to denote a group of landless and near landless labourers who largely depend on big landowners for employment. Every big landlord has a number of raiyot families and he fosters them for his own interest. Some raiyots have no homestead land but have been sheltered for many years by their monibs (landlords). Generally when the landlord needs agricultural labourers, he employs his raiyots first and pays low wages (lower than the market). Due to the feudal situation and extreme scarcity of employment, raiyots cannot speak out against this exploitation. The raiyot system in a different fashion exists in some other areas of the country especially where, like Sakhipur, a few households still own large plots of land and the large majority of families own virtually nothing.

sowing of aus/aman paddy and jute, the three widely cultivated traditional crops of the country. Before the start of this peak season, there is a short lean period which runs through late January to early March. During this slack season both human labour and animal power remain quite cheap and the landlords take advantage of this situation. They partly prepare some of their plots of land (particularly those plots which remain empty after harvesting aman paddy or some short-lived rabi crops) in advance and cleverly reduce the peak season labour demand vis-a-vis wage rates.

Many respondents reported to us that previously (10 -12 years ago) the landlords would never start land preparation in advance. Perhaps they have changed their minds recently because of increases in wages, shortage of animal power, irregular availability of family man-power due to the mobility of landowning households, and of course, the deteriorating rural economic condition.

Patrons, clients and non-farmers

Since 1950, the pattern of tenural arrangements between landlords and tenants or landlords and raiyots/labourers has diversified in the study areas. What is significant to note here is that in any arrangement the terms and conditions are always imposed by the landlords on tenants, lessees and labourers. Two separate studies (Hussain 1979, 2; Van Schendel 1981, 183) have argued that tenancy is a means of

'exploitation' of the weaker classes by well-to-do families in rural Bangladesh.

Hussain's study further revealed that more transactions of land between landlords and tenants took place between the stronger large landowners and weaker participants than between participants of similar strength. Jansen (1983) explained the tenural relationship between two participant households in terms of a patron-client relationship where the land-poor (client) tries to align himself with landlord (patron).

Among the circular migrant households the proportion of landless was 22 percent (103 out of 476) and half of them had no land-related occupation or income at all. In other words, they were neither farmer nor farm labourer. The study labelled these households as a non-labour landless type. Their socio-economic condition was comparatively better than landless labourers but was substantially lower in comparison with the landowning class. Why were these considerable numbers of households not interested in any farm occupation? To answer this question requires further research but it can be noted here that a striking characteristic of these households was their limited man-power.

Three-quarters of the non-labour landless households were a simple nuclear type (average family size was below 6 persons) and more than two-thirds (69 percent) had only one income source. Presumably a

large proportion of non-labour landless households might be newly established families, and their tenural status may change in the future. In addition it should be mentioned that usually landlords do not want to rent land to those families who have small quantities of man-power, assuming that they will not have adequate labour for land development. On the other hand, farming on tenant holdings with the help of hired labour is, in general, unprofitable. Under these circumstances, these non-labour landless families were found to depend only on off-farm occupations located mostly in towns.

7.4 HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

The analysis of household income characteristics is a complex and difficult task, particularly in rural areas where very often a family has two or three sources of income both in cash and in kind, and seldom keeps any detailed records of payments and receipts. Many factors such as occupation, education, family size/ composition and land holdings are closely related to the household's economic condition. Since these factors, which have been discussed in preceding sections, have an important impact on the pattern of income distribution, some impressions of the economic situations of movers and non-movers will have been formed already. These will definitely assist in the interpretation of the data introduced in this section.

7.4.1 Income and mover status

Table 7.10 and Figure 7.3 give a comparative view of the annual household income of movers, stayers and all rural households covered by the surveys in 1981. Results from these analyses clearly indicated that the economic condition of migrants families was much better than any other group of families. For example, the median income of CM households was 15600 taka. This amount was 30 percent higher than the median income of commuters (12000 taka), but 117 and 152 percent higher than the corresponding median incomes of stayers (7200 taka) and seasonal migrants (6180 taka).

Migrants and non-migrants

Variations in income between the circular migrant and non-migrant families were also well marked in the top and bottom 25 percent of households (upper and lower quartiles) (Table 7.10). In the lower quartile the difference in income between the migrants and the commuters was 14 percent, while between the migrants and the stayer-seasonal movers the difference was as high as 129 percent. In the upper quartile, the income variation between the migrants and the commuters was wider and averaged 42 percent. The other two groups of households (stayers and seasonal movers) recorded 128 and 110 percent variation respectively.

At high levels of income (households receiving over 60,000 taka, see Figure 7.3) the numbers of stayer and seasonal migrant families, were very small. Only

Table 7.10

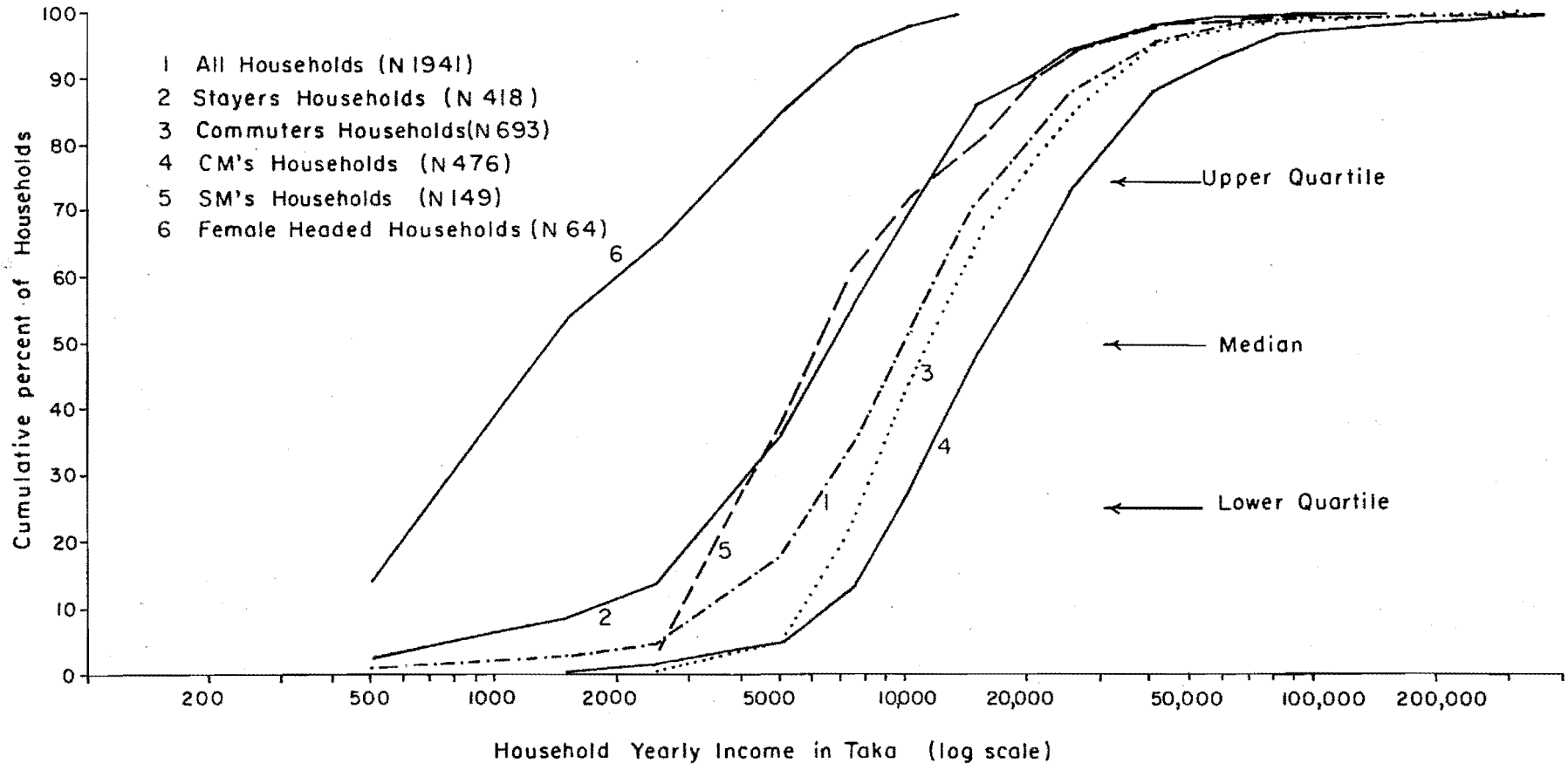
Median and Quartiles Incomes[1] of Movers, Stayers and All Households, 1981.

Households	Income			
	Lower Quartile	Median	Upper Quartile	Inter quartile range
All households (N 1941)	6000	9600	17400	11400
Stayer households (N 418)	4200	7200	11550	7350
Commuter households (N 693)	8400	12000	18600	10200
CM households (N 476)	9600	15600	26400	16800
SM households (N 149)	4200	6180	12540	8340

1 Annual income of a household in taka (US$ 1 = 15.45 Taka as of 1980).

Figure 7-3

HOUSEHOLD YEARLY INCOME DISTRIBUTION, 1981



42 households[7] out of a total of 1941 had an annual income of over 60,000 taka. Of these 42, 30 families had active circular migrants, 15 possessed commuters, two households were comprised of seasonal migrants and two were stayer families. When per capita incomes of sample migrants were compared with those of sample commuters and sample stayers it was found that in each study location the mean per capita income of the migrants was significantly higher than the per head income of the other two groups of families.

Incidence of mobility and income

The relationship between household income levels and the incidence of mobility is examined further in Table 7.11 and Figure 7.4. It appears that the average number of movers per household (mobility rate) is directly related to the household income level while the percentage of households which had no mover member at all (immobility rate) is inversely related to income. From the lowest to the highest income groups, the average number of active movers per household was found to vary from zero to 1.79 persons. On the other hand, the immobility rates ranged between 100 percent and 5 percent.

None of the eleven lowest-income families had a single mover member i.e. the rate of immobility for

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7 Of these 42 families seven had two forms of movers - six had commuters and circular migrants and one family had both seasonal and non-seasonal migrants.

Table 7.11

Rates of Mobility[1] and Immobility[2] by Household Income Groups, 1981.

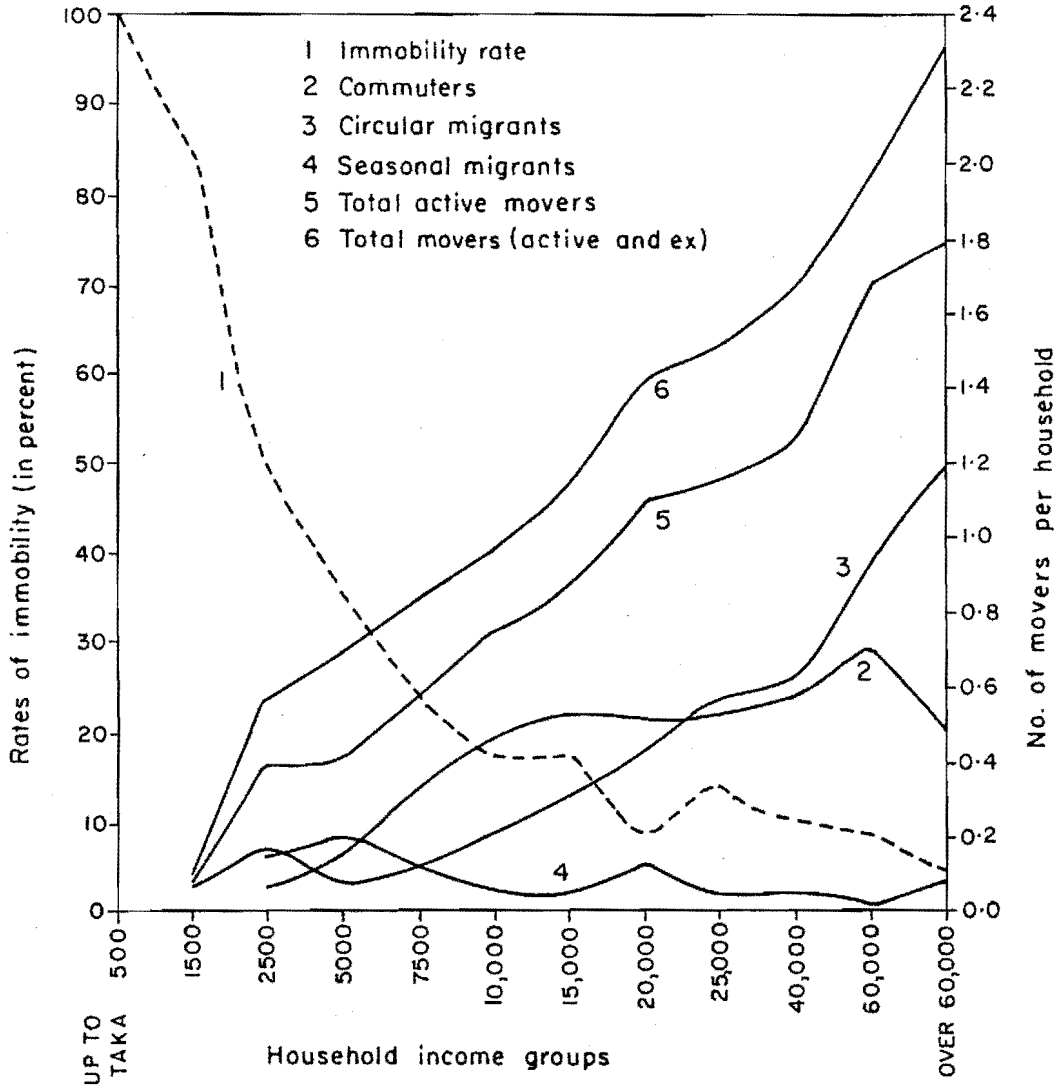
Income groups[3]	Total no. of households	Mobility rates (per household)						Immobility rates (in percent)
		Active commuters	Active circular migrants	Active seasonal migrants	All active movers[4]	All ex-movers[5]	Total movers[6]	
1. up to 500	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	100
2. 1500	30	-	0.07	-	0.07	0.03	0.10	83
3. 2500	41	0.07	0.17	0.15	0.39	0.17	0.56	49
4. 5000	264	0.15	0.06	0.20	0.40	0.25	0.69	36
5. 7500	340	0.34	0.12	0.12	0.58	0.25	0.83	24
6. 10000	317	0.47	0.21	0.06	0.75	0.22	0.97	18
7. 15000	390	0.53	0.31	0.05	0.88	0.26	1.14	18
8. 20000	172	0.51	0.45	0.13	1.09	0.33	1.42	9
9. 25000	129	0.53	0.57	0.05	1.15	0.36	1.51	14
10. 40000	161	0.57	0.63	0.05	1.25	0.42	1.67	11
11. 60000	44	0.70	0.95	0.02	1.68	0.30	1.98	9
12. over 60000	42	0.50	1.19	0.09	1.79	0.52	2.31	5
N	1941							418
n		813	599	178	1590	532	2122	

N Total number of households n Total number of movers

1 Average number of specified movers per household.
2 $\frac{\text{No. of stayer households}}{\text{Total no. of households}} \times 100$
3 Household yearly income in taka.
4 Active commuters, CMs and SMs.
5 Ex commuters, CMs and SMs.
6 All active and ex-movers.

Figure 7·4

RATES OF MOBILITY[1] AND IMMOBILITY[2]
BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME GROUPS, 1981



1. and 2. see footnote in Table 7·11

this particular income group was 100 percent. The next income group (group 2) also consisted of an overwhelming proportion of stayer families (83 percent or 25 out of 30 households). In the subsequent income categories the relative immobility rates decreased rapidly.

Further analysis revealed that two-thirds of all 418 stayer households came, in economic terms, from the lower half of income distribution for the 1941 families (Table 7.11). Among the wealthier families the proportions of stayer households were found to be very low. At the highest income group there were 42 households of which only five percent were stayers (Table 7.11).

The above evidence clearly indicates that richer families are capable of producing greater numbers of occupational movers than poorer households in Bangladesh. On average, the numbers of active movers that originated from lower income families (groups 1-5), middle income families (groups 6-8), and upper income families (groups 9-12) were 1.03, 1.18 and 1.42 persons respectively. The calculations which produced these statistics did not encompass 418 ever stayer families and 311 currently stayer households. As stated earlier these households were mostly concentrated in the lower to middle income levels.

Considering all these families (mover or stayer) together, Table 7.11 and Figure 7.4 thus demonstrate a far more complete picture of mobility trends in relation

to the households' economic conditions. It was found that the incidence of active movers from the lowest to the highest income levels varied remarkably from 0 to 1.79 persons per household. The ratio of currently moving members who originated from the lower, middle and upper income families was almost 1:2:3 (exact ratio was 0.47:0.87:1.33 persons per household). This pattern strongly suggests that the richer families in Bangladesh are able to generate higher numbers of movers than the poorer households.

7.4.2 Mobility strategies and income

The mobility patterns of different income groups revealed that among the lower (not the lowest) to middle income families commuting was more attractive than circular migration, while the latter movement type was predominantly found among people in the upper income groups. Seasonal migration was very much the choice of poor families.

The case of the very poor

It is seldom that the poorest families can afford to earn a living through the temporary migration process. There were 82 families whose annual income did not exceed 2500 taka. Of these households, only 16 (19 percent) had active movers, mostly (13 out of 16) seasonal and non-seasonal migrants. The reason for choosing migration instead of commuting is that in the rural areas the opportunities for dual income (farm plus

off-farm) through commuting are limited, for the low-income households. This is because these families own virtually no land or cattle and they have a severe shortage of adult male manpower.

The average family size of those 16 households was only 3.56 persons, and the remaining 66 households (out of 82) which did not have any active movers had an even smaller number of family members (less than 2.45 persons). Connell et al (1976, 20) quoted Abou-Zeid (1963) who found that in Egypt the poorest male villagers had not migrated because their small families consisted mainly of women and young children, and they did not have male kin to whom they could entrust their families and cultivation in their absence. A growing number of studies (Connell et al 1976; Lipton 1980) have directly or indirectly stated numerous obstacles and disincentives to emigration faced by the poorest villagers in many developing countries. This matter is discussed further at length in the latter part of Chapter 8.

The case of the circular migrants

The concentration of income in the families with circular migrants, as evident in Figure 7.3, is definitely influenced by several factors which together reflect the economic condition of a village family in Bangladesh. Of them, size of land holdings, educational achievements, household size and composition, and the

nature and diversity of occupation were considered to be very important. The concentration of income is, in fact, positively associated with the concentration of these variables. This can be seen in Table 7.12.

The most important factors which favoured the migrant families in improving their income levels were a better education and larger family size. Given these two advantages, the circular migrant families were able to produce a significantly higher number of gainful earners (per household) than commuter and stayer households.

The data in Table 7.12 also reveal a notable difference (both quantitative and qualitative) in earning members between the upper and middle income groups of mover families and between mover and stayer families of upper income groups. The reasons for these differences are, once again, closely linked to education and family size. It is worth mentioning, for instance, that effective educational achievements (at least SSC passed) were heavily clustered in the upper-income mover families, especially among circular migrant households (Table 7.12).

Further analysis confirmed that economic improvement was found to be quite common among the circular migrant families. All sample households were questioned regarding changes in relative economic condition over the five ears 1976 to 1981. Sixty-nine percent of the circular migrant families (64 out of 93)

Table 7.12

Some Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Movers and Stayers Families by Their Household Income Levels, 1981.

Characteristics	Household Income Levels (taka)				
	Lowest income 0-2500	Lower income 2501-7500	Middle income 7501-20,000	Upper income over 20,000	Total
Number of households					
Stayers	56	179	141	42	418
Commuters	3	151	384	155	693
Circular migrants	8	56	229	183	476
(a) Literacy rate (in percent)					
Male stayers[1]	24	33	49	64	44
Male active commuters	66	42	49	77	55
Male active CMs	22	61	75	90	79
(b) Percent at least SSC passed					
Male stayers[1]	-	-	4	3	2
Male active commuters	-	1	5	23	9
Male active CMs	-	5	23	46	31
(c) Percentage of landless households					
Stayer households	66	35	15	-	29
Commuter households	100	60	32	6	33
Circular migrant households	38	45	26	9	22
(d) Percentage of near landless (land up to 0.50 acre)					
Stayer households	21	30	22	2	24
Commuter households	-	30	37	18	31
Circular migrant households	62	29	35	16	27
(e) Average amount of land per household (in acres)					
Stayer households	0.14	0.52	1.30	8.97	1.58
Commuter households	-	0.19	0.60	2.56	0.95
Circular migrant households	0.17	0.37	0.91	3.52	1.84
(f) Average family size					
Stayer households	2.36	4.85	6.45	8.62	5.43
Commuter households	5.00	4.60	6.29	9.64	6.65
Circular migrant households	3.37	5.12	6.74	9.85	7.71
(g) Percentage of joint and extended families[2]					
Stayer households	7	9	21	57	18
Commuter households	-	11	21	50	25
Circular migrant households	12	18	31	62	41
(h) Average income sources per household					
Stayer households	1.43	2.06	2.43	2.64	2.14
Commuter households	1.66	2.00	2.46	3.25	2.53
Circular migrant households	1.75	1.91	2.41	3.02	2.60
(i) Average no. of gainful earners per household[3]					
Stayer households	1.11	1.17	1.36	1.40	1.25
Commuter households	1.00	1.13	1.55	2.59	1.69
Circular migrant households	1.50	1.39	1.85	2.81	2.16

- Nil

1 Percentage of male stayers having gainful employment.
2 Family types 4 and 5 (see Table 7.3).
3 Male and female earners.

stated that they had improved their incomes. The proportions of households having improved incomes among 120 commuter families and the same number of stayer samples were 55 percent and 43 percent respectively.

A general trend

These quantitative and qualitative assessments of earning members of a family seem to be very important in Bangladesh where there is fierce competition for scarce resources and employment throughout the country. One recent study (Osmani and Rahman, 1981) quoted by Hartmann and Boyce (1983, 270) revealed a grim situation showing that the real income of the top five percent of the households in rural Bangladesh rose by 24 percent between 1963/64 and 1976/77, while that of the bottom 85 percent declined by 33 percent. It was observed during field work in 1981 that due to the severe employment crisis in the rural areas and fear of deteriorating economic prospects in the future, families of all economic statuses were anxiously trying to diversify their income sources by utilising all possible resources of each potential earning member. However, only families with large reserves of man-power with varied skills, and considerable amounts of land, cattle and capital were found to be successful in expanding their economic ventures in and outside their native places.

Bangladesh is registered by the United Nations as one of the least developed and poorest countries in the world. Technological and economic problems mean that

rural families continue to rely heavily on the family's man-power - both in terms of quantity and quality of skill. In this regard, the trend towards concentration of income in larger families may help the concentration of land, education, and employment prospects, and these phenomena may reinforce one another. The relationships between mobility strategies and socio-economic status in rural society is analysed further in Chapter 8.

7.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter an attempt has been made to identify the important demographic and socio-economic attributes of different groups of movers. The main findings can be summarized as follows:

1. The relationship between family size and the propensity to move out for work suggests that movers tend to come from relatively large households. There is a positive relationship between family size and numbers of movers (all types of movers together). However, further investigation has indicated that the family sizes of different types of movers as well as stayers vary significantly. Generally, circular migrants tend to come from larger families than commuters, seasonal migrants and stayers.

2. As migrants tend to come from larger households, joint and extended families are more likely to promote migration. Thus, the probability of having a migrant

member in a family increases with the successive expansion of the family structure. In contrast, it is found that earning members from small households and nuclear families largely prefer short-term movements (e.g. commuting and seasonal migration) or to stay in the village. Families which are very large and complex in structure mostly have two different types of movers, circular migrants and commuters.

3. It was found that the birth order and number of sons in a family are often important in determining a specific mobility behaviour of an earner. Migrants are usually younger sons, while stayers and commuters are generally elder sons of single-son families or families with a small number of sons.

4. An examination of mobility behaviour of fathers and sons has indicated that the father's mobility status determines to a great extent the son's movement behaviour. Similarly the mobility strategies of older sons may have a substantial influence on the attitudes of younger sons.

5. In each study area, circular migrants have better access to agricultural land than other types of movers and stayers. It was found that circular migrant families own a significantly greater amount of land than stayer, commuter and seasonal migrant families. Various factors, demographic, social and economic, have favoured the migrant families over non-migrant families in the acquisition of agricultural land.

6. The distribution pattern of operated-land between the migrant and non-migrant households is the opposite of their land ownership pattern. Field evidence has indicated that migrant households usually rent out a large proportion of their land to tenant farmers. A migrant family was found to operate a smaller amount of land than a stayer household and a commuter one.

7. The tenural status of households with active circular migrants differs considerably from the status of all other families. The most striking difference is that, unlike other households, migrants are less likely to practise tenant farming, but more likely to lease or rent out land to tenant farmers (mainly sharecroppers). In order to cultivate land they hire labour more commonly than other households. It is often argued that the land-rich migrant families prefer to utilize their family labour in more remunerative occupations in towns and reap the fruits of land by extracting cheap farm-labour and exploiting 'land-hungry' sharecroppers in the rural areas.

8. From the analysis of household income patterns of movers and stayers, it has become clear that the economic condition of circular migrant families is better than any other group of families in the rural areas. The concentration of income in migrant households is positively associated with the concentration of land, education and employment among these families. It was also found that levels of household income of

commuters were higher than those of stayers and seasonal migrants. They earned income from farm and off-farm sources, but the latter source was very important since the commuters own a smaller amount of land compared to the circular migrants and stayers.

9. The relationship between household income level and mobility type indicated that among the lower (not the lowest) to middle income families, commuting was more attractive than circular migration. On the other hand, people from upper income families preferred circular migration. Unlike these two major flows, seasonal migration was clearly suited to the poor families.

The relationship between socio-economic status and mobility strategies in rural Bangladesh is more complex than this analysis of household income levels suggests. The links between socio-economic status and mobility behaviour in a Muslim society are examined in greater depth in Chapter 8.

CHAPTER 8

MOBILITY BEHAVIOUR AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

A major concern of recent migration studies has been establishing the relationship between mobility behaviour and social structure. Exploring the relationship between population movement and integrated rural development, Fuguitt (1979, 104), for example, has stressed that an understanding of the determinants and consequences of migration for rural development requires looking at the social structure and the differential position of individuals who may or may not migrate in that structure. In this chapter the relationship between rates of commuting, migration, total mobility and immobility and levels of household socio-economic (SE) status are examined. An overview of relevant literature on this issue in the Asian context, especially with reference to the Indian sub-continent precedes an analysis of mobility and socio-economic status in rural Bangladesh.

8.1 A SOCIAL CONTEXT

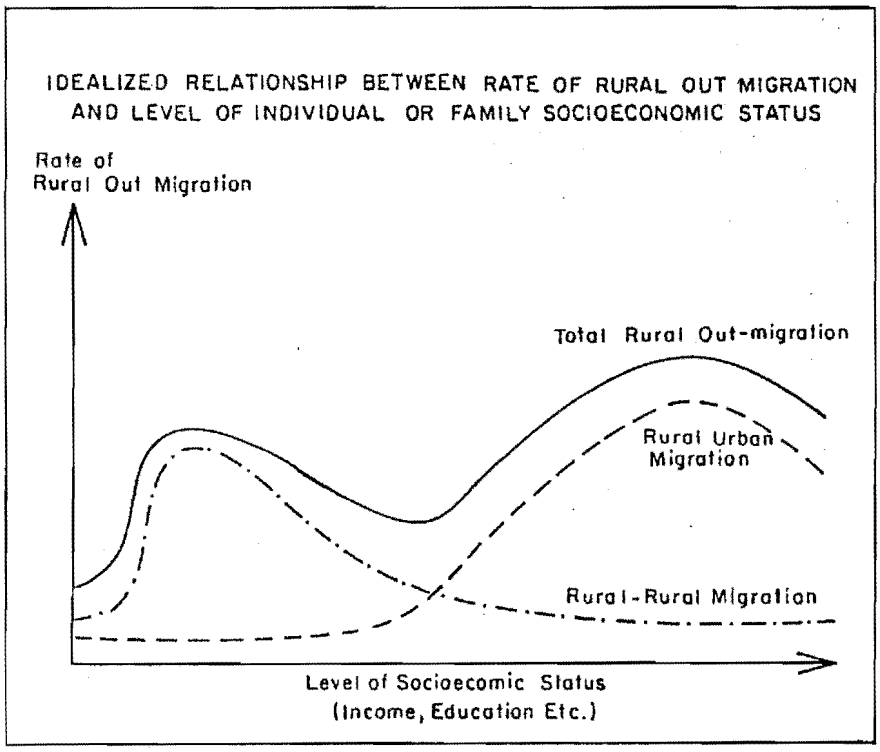
For over a decade a number of researchers (Connell et al. 1976, Lipton 1980, Chaudhury 1983, Boer 1981, Oberai and Singh 1982, Caldwell 1969, Skeldon 1976) have viewed rural out-migration in the context of unequal distribution of income, wealth (mostly land) and education among rural families, and have suggested that

the propensity to leave rural areas is higher among households that are either poor or rich. Connell and others (1976, 197) have suggested that in villages where land is unequally distributed rates of migration are higher among both the poor and the rich as compared to rates for the very poorest, the "middle" income group, and the very richest. These studies reveal a bimodal pattern of rural out-migration, an idealized pattern of which is shown in Figure 8.1. The model indicates that rates of migration are highest for those at medium-low and medium-high levels of socio-economic status. It also suggests that lower income groups tend to move to nearby rural areas and the higher income groups are more apt to move greater distances into larger urban areas. Rhoda (1983, 43-44) explains this situation as follows:

> Wealthier rural income groups are more apt to migrate or send their educated youth to larger cities in order to take advantage of their higher education levels or modern skills. On the other hand, relatively poor groups can only afford to migrate short distances and are expected to search for either agricultural or unskilled work in nearby areas because they generally lack the education, skills and information needed to compete in larger cities. The poorest of the poor are not expected to migrate because they lack funds for migration and are too preoccupied with survival. The middle income rural residents might be less apt to migrate because they are fairly secure as farmers or petty entrepreneurs and lack the urban skills which might motivate migration.

There have been few studies of the relationship between socio-economic status of rural families and the detailed patterns of mobility (and immobility) of

Figure 8.1



Source: Rhoda 1983, Fig.1, p.44

working people. It has been suggested in earlier chapters that in rural Bangladesh people from different SE status groups have different patterns of movement for a livelihood. As we show later in this chapter, the total pattern of movement conforms to the bi-modal distribtion by status found in other studies. However, the evidence suggests that people from the upper strata of society prefer different movement forms and strategies to those in other strata. The propensity to migrate is higher among high status families, while commuting and seasonal migration are more common in lower status families. Understanding these relationships requires an appreciation of social stratification in rural Bangladesh today.

8.1.1 Social Stratification in Rural Bangladesh

The question of caste

There is a substantial literature on Muslim social stratification in Bangladesh. It is evident from most of the studies that the social stratification system among the Muslims differs quite significantly from that of the Hindus in the sub-continent. The most recent effort to deal with the distinctive characteristics of Muslim stratification in Bangladesh has been made by Arefeen (1982).

In his review article, Arefeen points out several fundamental differences between Muslim social hierarchy and Hindu caste. First, as Islam is based on principles of social egalitarianism, there is no strict

purity-pollution notion (concept of high-born and low-born status) in Muslim society. Second, no religious or ideological restrictions are advanced for practising endogamy and commensality among the Muslims of different occupation, education and income groups.

A Muslim person has alternatives as far as marriage partners are concerned. If he desires to improve his economic status, which is common as we show later, he tends to marry into a better class family. On the other hand, following the rule of endogamy a Hindu man must marry into his ascribed occupational caste and thus for him no alternatives are available. Unlike the situation with Hindu caste, Muslim stratification in Bangladesh is flexible and social mobility from one stratum to another, particularly from lower positions to upper positions, can be achieved by means of wealth, education and marriage contact with the upper status family. More precisely, within Muslim communities a family or an individual can lose, maintain or improve his status by socio-economic achievements in competition with others.

Despite these differences between Islam and Hinduism, a few authors have focused on Muslim stratification from the point of view of 'caste' or 'cast-like'. Arefeen has criticised their works by saying that a general drawback of these works is that they are vague. He also comments that most of those authors mistakenly viewed the Muslim stratification

system as a form of Hindu caste. However, it is not necessary to enter into the debate as the present study found caste to be of little importance in Muslim village societies in Bangladesh.

Other bases for differentiation

Lack of religious or ideological justification for approving social distinctions and social differentiation in Muslim societies has created an unconformable situation as to determining the exact nature of Muslim stratification. This led many researchers (e.g. Bertocci 1970, 1974, 1979, Arefeen 1982, Guha 1965, Mukherjee 1948, Zaidi 1970, Islam 1974, Jahangir 1982) to undertake empirical study with a view to identify the proper determinants of relative status, position or rank of a Muslim family or an individual in hierarchial order.

Empirical evidence from these studies indicates that social stratification in Muslim villages is determined by a group of interrelated factors such as a family's economic, educational, occupational and social backgrounds. Guha (1965), for example, shows that the 'caste barriers' among the Muslims in West Bengal (India) are created by social, economic and educational factors rather than the operation of caste principles (Arefeen 1982, 68). Similar results come from Zaidi's (1970) study of village life in Comilla district in Bangladesh.

Bertocci (1970, 1974, 1979) studied social

stratification by applying both Marxian and Weberian models and observes that the social stratification in his two research villages - Hajipur and Tinpara in Bangladesh - resembles more of a class system than a caste one (Arefeen 1982, 64-65). He identifies wealth and lineage as two important bases of Muslim hierarchy in Bangladesh.

Several recent works dealing with the conditions of existence in rural Bangladesh (Van Schendel 1981, Arens and Van Beurden 1977, Jansen 1983, Hartmann and Boyce 1983) are also a potential source of information on village social structure. A central theme of these studies has been to explore the real life situation in the countryside and the mechanisms by which social and economic inequalities among different groups of village households are maintained and reproduced. Van Schendel (1981) and Arens and Van Beurden (1977), for example, stratified their study households into several peasant groups on the basis of ownership and control of land. They found that the distribution of land or land-based income is positively associated with the economic class and social status of village families.

Several common factors were identified that have brought about and maintained the socio-economic positions or classes in the villages. Chief among these is one that is mentioned widely in all studies cited so far, namely the possession of wealth which includes effective income from all sources, agricultural and non-

agricultural. In a village situation where agriculture is the predominant source of income, the ownership and control of land has been recognised by most researchers as the prime factor for differentiating household socio-economic status. Other important factors for social stratification are: occupation and education background of the family, marital relations and lineage status, and religious practice, especially the observance of purdah (socio-religious tradition of secluding women from public view).

Wealth and social stratification

Wealth, as a factor of determining social stratification, is very important in Bangladesh, one of the poorest countries in the world, where economic resources are few, distribution of them is unequal, and most people are preoccupied with survival or subsistence living. Chowdhury (1978) studied social stratification in Meherpur, a village in Dhaka district. He observed that the present pattern of social structure and stratification in rural Bangladesh has undergone many changes due to various national, regional and global events since the 1940s. He suggests:

> ... economic class and social status are almost identical in Meherpur and it is possible to establish (a) certain correlation between the two. The high status Muslims of Meherpur are landowners and the low status Muslims are sharecroppers and landless labourers with few overlappings. (Chowdhury 1978, 86).

The link between wealth or economic power and

social status is clear from a well-known and widely quoted Bengali proverb: "Last year I was a Jola (weaver, low status), this year I have become a Sheikh (middle status) and if next year's crops are good, I shall be a Syed (high status, believed to be the descendants of the Prophet)." The proverb first quoted by Gait (1902) more than 80 years ago, is still on the lips of people in the rural areas today. Presently the proverb also refers to all individual mobility, not only between the "low-born" occupation groups but also the rest of the Muslim population (Jansen 1983, 76) citing Bertocci 1970 and Chowdhury 1978).

The statuses of various patronymics, titles, and lineages derive their significance from different sources (see Gait 1913, Chowdhury 1978, Karim 1976). However, in the rural Bangladesh context, social status depends very much on economic power, and the consolidation of economic power legitimates social status over time (Jahangir 1982, 129). Bertocci (1970, 73) cites a village saying that: 'Nowadays if one's economic position is good, one's lineage status is also good.' He also comments that upward social mobility among South Asian Muslims is basically a function of wealth (Bertocci 1974, 106).

Education and occupation

Education and occupation levels are closely related with the economic power of a family. In fact, these three indicators of social stratification

are functionally intertwined both among themselves and with class identification and status symbols (life style) among village people. Education is a kind of investment whereby one acquires a better occupation which in turn ensures better income, and hence the whole process results in an improvement of class position or socio-economic standing of an individual and his family.

Among Muslims many members of the so-called "lower caste" have changed their inferior social status into a more valued position by means of achieving higher education and a better profession. These two achievements in turn certainly cause further upward mobility of one's status. As a result it is easier to marry into rich and high status families. Jansen (1983, 77) reports a good example of this:

> An unmarried research investigator from a Government institute who often came to the village told us he felt like a prince in the village. Many rich fathers of girls of marriageable age were eager to meet him. The research investigator told us his father was a poor peasant living far away, but the fact that he had a Government job made him potentially, a very attractive son-in-law.

In summary, the major points derived from the discussion so far are: social stratification among the Muslims in rural Bangladesh is not based on a caste model; rather it is mostly determined by a whole mixture of socio-economic criteria such as wealth, education, occupation, lineage, and other social factors. Among these criteria, wealth, in general, appears to be the most important factor. An increase

or decrease in wealth, status, power, knowledge etc. very often causes social mobility (mobility from one stratum to another, either upward or downward) among Muslim families or individuals.

Classes

Lack of any rigid ideological barrier to changing social status in Muslim communities has persuaded some social scholars to investigate the Muslim stratification system in the context of an open class system instead of a strict caste order (Bertocci 1974, 106). According to Karl Marx social classes emerge between which there are no legal or supra-natural barriers to social mobility (Mitchell 1979, 196). In this respect Bertocci's (1974, 103) comment is 'social stratification in ... Bangladesh may best be understood as a highly flexible, embryonic class system, rather than a caste system'. Cain et al. (1979, 406) have a similar view as they have remarked 'Rural Bangladesh is a class society hierarchically organized primarily on the basis of ownership and control of arable land.'

8.1.2 Classification of socio-economic status

An important problem still not clearly resolved by researchers is the classification of rural households in Bangladesh into various socio-economic groups, statuses or classes. The literature available on social stratification, discussed in the previous section, is primarily concerned with the general social structure,

its changes through time, and major factors that are related to the changes and maintenance of social structure in rural areas.

Two empirical studies, published recently, classified village families into several peasant classes on the basis of ownership and control of land. However, a growing number of researchers (see Van Schendel 1981, 37) are arguing about the justification of such classification, especially in the context of Bangladesh where nowadays a large proportion of rural families have increasingly become involved in non-peasant economic pursuits, and where a household, in most cases, holds two or three income sources of varying nature (see section 6.4 and Appendix 2). The difficulties of classifying peasants 'in the field' are demonstrated by various problems faced by Arens and Van Beurden (1977). They felt their classification of village households to be still "mainly tentative" and exclusively applicable to their survey village and its surroundings.

Economic structure

One of the earliest attempts to understand the socio-economic structure of rural people in Bangladesh was undertaken by Ramkrishna Mukherjee (1948, 1971). He studied six villages in Bogra district between 1942 and 1945. Mukherjee gave emphasis to the economic structure of the village, with an analysis of activities of various occupation groups. To determine the hierarchy of economic structure he grouped the

occupations into three ranks or classes, viz., upper, middle, and lower, depending upon the socio-economic position of the occupational groups in rural society.

The upper rank is composed of "feudal" landlords, prosperous peasantry, persons in well-paid jobs, and big traders. The middle rank comprises mainly the self-sufficient peasantry, 'non-cultivating owner' and 'artisan and small trader' which maintains a reasonably self-sufficient existence partly based on land. The lower rank consists of small tenants (share-croppers), agricultural labourers, beggars and others.

According to Mukherjee, the hierarchical order of these occupation groups is based on inequalities in income distribution and expenditure patterns. Thus villagers belonging to the upper class have a prosperous life and maintain a surplus budget, those at the bottom of the social heap maintain a bare living, while those in the middle are obviously somewhere in-between (Mukherjee 1971, 154). According to Chowdhury (1978, 3), Mukherjee's use of the terms 'class' and 'occupation group' is not very clear. However, his study is the only one of its kind to deal with the economic differentiation in a few villages of Bangladesh. Obviously, it gives us some idea of the economic hierarchy of rural Bangladesh in the mid-forties.

A different technique has been applied by Willem Van Schendel (1981) to interpret economic differentiation among families in rural Bangladesh. He classified

village households into four economic categories (A, B, C, and D, see Figure 8.4) on the basis of their ability or inability to maintain their families for a certain period at a certain standard of living (Van Schendel 1981, 90-91). In his view, this 'simple economic categorization of households' relieved him from the difficulties of calculating household income, and also from the complexity of class analysis of peasants or occupation groups.

One common characteristic of these three studies is that they used a monolithic approach to classify village households which stressed only the economic criterion. For example, Arens and Van Beurden (1977) stressed possession of land, Mukherjee (1971) emphasized income, while Van Schendel (1981) measured a family's economic condition in terms of the number of months it could maintain itself.

The problem of measuring socio-economic classes or ranks, which needs a pluralistic approach, remains virtually unsolved. This has also been noted by Mia and his co-authors who observed: 'Any satisfactory approach to define social class in Bangladesh under the present conditions lacking sufficient empirical studies may not be established quickly' (Mia et al. 1975, 10). The present study, however, has considered a range of factors in the identification of socio-economic ranks or classes in the rural areas.

A pyramid structure

It has been accepted that there are two basic shapes describing social strata or class structures - the pyramid and the diamond. The latter is the typical pattern for modernized societies and the former mostly represents underdeveloped societies, especially where there are strong pressures toward social inequality (Barber 1968, 295). The general characteristics of the pyramidal social structure are that a small group of families, who lie at the apex, enjoy much of the social and economic prosperity and the large majority of families who stay at or near the base of the pyramid struggle even to obtain a bare living. This pyramid structure was considered to be relevant to the Bangladesh situation and village society was therefore stratified into three broad classes: upper class, middle class, and lower class (see Figure 8.2). Everywhere in Bangladesh people often talk about three customary classes (srenis) and their most common Bengali synonyms such as borolok, dhani (upper class), moidhom sreni (middle class), Chhotolok, daridralok, gorib (lower class) (Van Schendel 1981, 92; Mia et al. 1975, 13). These three broad social strata are further divided into several sub-strata as shown in Figure 8.2. Seven SE strata or SE status groups are identified in this study: two comprising the upper class, three for the middle and two for the lower class groups.

Defining SE status in villages

In the village a person is usually known by his family and a family is known by its socio-economic condition or status. Therefore, the household or the family is generally considered to be the unit of social and economic stratification in rural communities. In the field the 1941 households surveyed in the 14 villages were classified into seven SE status groups on the basis of household possession of land, income, chowkidary tax, tenural status, education level, occupation, housing condition, attitudes towards manual labour, and some social indicators, mainly lineage status and degree of observance of purdah. All these criteria were not applied for the identification of the SE status of every household in every fieldwork site. However, very often a mixture of criteria was used, especially in determining the SE status of the extended type of households.

The process of classification of households was carried on in three stages. The first was on the occasion of the house to house census inquiry, where each household was given a particular SE status on the basis of factual information provided by the family. During the second visit to the household, when detailed information on mobility and economic activities was sought, the initial status was verified. This visit involved 22 percent of the total households (431 out of 1941) selected on a sampling basis (see Appendix 6).

The third stage involved consultation wth a group of elderly villagers who usually knew the SE condition of every household very well. Here the ascribed status for all households was verified.

In the context of village life, it is difficult to evaluate the socio-economic standing of a household and also to locate households appropriately in the pyramid model of class structure. There are several factors responsible for this. First of all, class identification of a family is purely a subjective determination which cannot be easily quantified in a strict sense. Second, class consciousness among the villagers in Bangladesh has not yet been sufficiently developed, perhaps mainly due to mass illiteracy of people and lack of appropriate political mobilization.

The lack of class or political consciousness especially in rural Bangladesh, has been explained in some recent village-based studies. In one of these studies it is argued that: 'Most villagers in Jhagrapur are poverty conscious without being class conscious' (Arens and Van Beurden 1977, 77). In addition, the class position of many families is changing as a result of an increase or decrease in their wealth, power, prestige, ability or knowledge.

There is an argument that the system of self-evaluating or self-rating of class position is subject to bias. As was noted above, most villagers are not very conscious of class even though terms such as,

dhani, borolok, gorib, sorbohara are used to denote certain social groups. People from the middle to lower ranks especially usually feel uneasy when someone unknown to them directly asks about a person's status or class. In this context, it is perhaps worthwhile to quote once again from the Jhagrapur study:

> In Jhagrapur there is a large family headed by a wise old man with whom we had a good relationship. We wanted the family to decide for itself to which class it belongs. The father used to argue that he was a middle peasant and had never sold his labour. His sons never showed a sign of agreement or disagreement (probably expressing their respect for him in this way). The sons worked for others from time to time. In the absence of their father they told us that they would have to do so more and more in the future, especially after they all would be married. In fact, they admitted that they had become or soon would become poor peasants. We finally decided to classify the family as poor peasant since all male working members were selling their labour from time to time while the father did not work at all due to his old age. But if we had come to the village ten years earlier they probably would have been classified as middle peasant. Apparently it was difficult for the father to accept that the family's situation had deteriorated. (Arens and Van Beurden 1977, 77).

Considering these difficult problems of classifying village social strata, the present study has relied on factual information, observation, group consulting, and extensive cross-checking of those variables which are related to class identification. In this way it has been possible to derive empirically a reasonable estimate of the hierarchy of households statuses in rural Bangladesh.

The status of village households

The distribution of households according to their SE status is shown in Table 8.1. Most of the families in the villages are, in fact, either middle class or lower class; the upper class group comprises a very small proportion of the total households in each study area. For example, in Rampal, this particular class accounted for only 4.67 percent of the total 684 households. The corresponding percentages for Chandina and Sakhipur were 5.59 and 2.61 respectively.

The most rich families ("upper class 1"), who lie at the apex of the SE pyramid, are in fact very few in number. Within the 14 villages, there were only 22 such families (1.1 percent of 1941). On the other hand, at the base of the pyramid a significant proportion of the households (12.1 percent of 1941) were classified as destitute (SE stratum 7). As regards the comparative SE condition of the families in the three survey locations, the situation in Chandina appears to be slightly better than that in Rampal and significantly better as compared to Sakhipur (Table 8.1).

Table 8.2 shows the distribution of household, population, and household size by SE groups. It is apparent from the table that in the upper strata the share of village population is higher than the corresponding share of village households. In the lower strata it is the reverse, i.e. the population proportions are lower as compared to the household

Table 8.1

Socio-Economic Status of Households in the Study Villages, 1981.

Village	Socio-economic status														Total
	Upper class				Middle class						Lower class				
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
1 Ballal Bari	0		4	4.0	9	9.0	11	11.0	21	21.0	47	47.0	8	8.0	100
2 Chaugararpar	0		2	2.0	8	8.1	13	13.1	18	18.2	44	44.4	14	14.1	99
3 Kalinjipara	1	0.5	2	0.9	20	9.2	24	11.0	66	30.3	81	37.2	24	11.0	218
4 Daosar	6	2.2	17	6.4	33	12.4	42	15.7	52	19.5	81	30.3	36	13.5	267
Rampal Total	7	1.0	25	3.6	70	10.2	90	13.1	157	22.9	253	37.0	82	12.0	684
5 Biswas	1	1.2	7	8.5	5	6.1	21	25.6	27	32.9	12	14.6	9	11.0	82
6 Chandiara	4	2.3	2	1.2	18	10.6	45	26.5	42	24.7	51	30.0	8	4.7	170
7 Goumbura	5	2.5	7	3.4	26	12.8	52	25.6	34	16.7	68	33.5	11	5.4	203
8 Madham Tala	1	0.6	7	4.6	20	13.1	41	26.8	36	23.5	34	22.2	14	9.1	153
Chandina Total	11	1.8	23	3.8	69	11.3	159	26.1	139	22.9	165	27.1	42	6.9	608
9 Malot Kandi	1	1.0	5	4.9	8	7.8	12	11.8	15	14.7	41	40.2	20	19.6	102
10 Rari Kandi	0		2	1.2	10	5.8	18	10.5	43	25.0	69	40.1	30	17.4	172
11 Syail Kandi	0		1	1.3	5	6.8	4	5.4	16	21.6	36	48.6	12	16.2	74
12 Sarder Kandi	2	2.4	1	1.2	12	14.3	8	9.5	22	26.2	31	36.9	8	9.5	84
13 Sarker Kandi	0		4	4.0	10	10.0	9	9.0	25	25.0	30	30.0	22	22.0	100
14 Matbor Kandi	1	0.8	0		5	4.3	10	8.5	36	30.8	46	39.3	19	16.2	117
Sakhipur Total	4	0.6	13	2.0	50	7.7	61	9.4	157	24.2	253	39.0	111	17.1	649
All villages Total	22	1.1	61	3.1	189	9.7	310	16.0	453	23.3	671	34.6	235	12.1	1941

Note: The division of families (or individuals) into three broad customary classes - upper, middle and lower is a useful technique to study socio-economic condition of people in many parts of the world. Some researchers may further divide each class into two or three sub-classes in order to identify more clearly the relative position of households within each broad class. Generally the middle class includes a wide range of socio-economic characteristics and hence in the present study it is into three sub-strata.

Table 8.2

Number of Households, Population and Household Size by Socio-Economic Status, 1981

Socio-Economic status	Households N	Households %	Population N	Population %	Household size
Upper class 1	22	1.1	287	2.3	13.0
Upper class 2	61	3.1	602	4.9	9.9
Middle class 3	189	9.7	1528	12.3	8.1
Middle class 4	310	16.0	2190	17.7	7.1
Middle class 5	453	23.3	3024	24.4	6.7
Lower class 6	671	34.6	3747	30.2	5.6
Lower class 7	235	12.1	1013	8.2	4.3
Total	1941	100.0	12391	100.0	6.4

proportions. This has been caused by a marked variation of household size between the upper and lower strata; an upper class household contains, on average, 10.7 members, while a family from the lower class consists of 5.2 persons on average (Table 8.2). Nevertheless, this variation is not due to lower fertility among the poor, but to a less complicated household structure (see Chapter 7).

8.2 MOBILITY IN A PYRAMIDAL SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Circular movement is a means by which many rural families in Bangladesh maintain or improve their livelihood in the rural setting by sending their members to work for money in towns or the rural hubs of non-agricultural activities, the haats and thana centres. However, people from all socio-economic levels are not able to move for employment with equal freedom and flexibility. Different SE strata follow different patterns of circulation. In this part of the thesis, the relationship between mobility behaviour and socio-economic structure of individuals or households is examined. The interpretations are mostly based on statistics collected for active movers (i.e. those who have currently been involved in moving) and lifetime stayers who never moved for the purpose of employment but were found to be working in economic activities available in and around their village home.

8.2.1 Mobility and socio-economic status

The pyramidal social structure is divided into five groups on the basis of the household's mobility behaviour. These groups provide a mobility profile of rural families or people (Figure 8.2). Within this profile, groups B and D were found to be much more mobile than other groups. Group A which lies at the top of the pyramid, has a mobility rate which is of medium intensity. Villagers in groups C and E are labelled as less mobile.

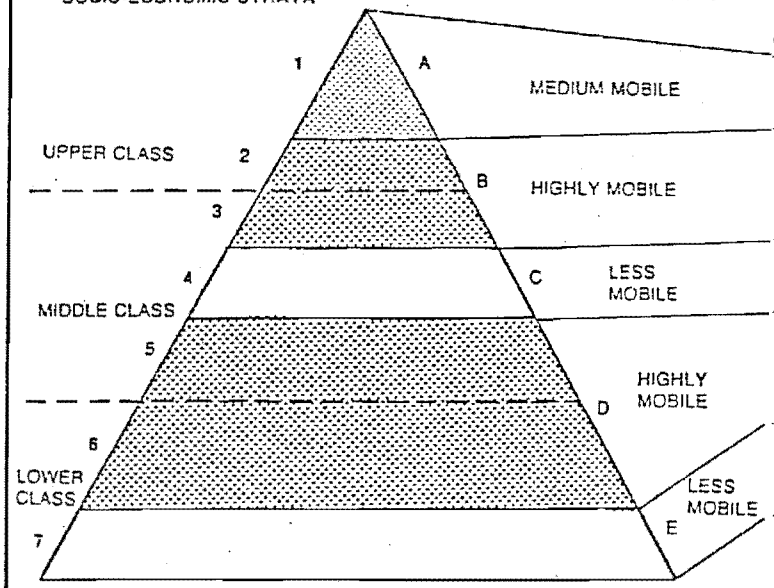
This pattern is illustrated more clearly in Figure 8.3 where the rates of mobility and immobility of villagers are plotted against the socio-economic status of individuals or families. The figure shows a bi-modal pattern which indicates that the movers are concentrated among the fairly rich (SE strata 2/3) and among the fairly poor classes (SE strata 5/6). The remaining groups such as groups A, C and E have lower rates of mobility. The major characteristics of the five mobile groups and their (groups) levels of response to different mobility types and streams are illustrated in Figure 8.2 and Table 8.5.

Highly mobile population

In the highly mobile population there are two groups of people - B, which is located within the upper socio-economic strata (strata 2/3); and D, which lies near the base of the socio-economic pyramid (SE strata

Figure 8·2

MOBILITY PROFILE OF PEOPLE OF DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS GROUPS FROM 14 VILLAGES IN BANGLADESH



Mobility Groups	Commuting	Seasonal Migration	Circular Migration	Some Important Socio-Economic Characteristics of People Within Different Mobility Groups
	Group Response to Different Mobility Behavioural Types			
MEDIUM MOBILE	L Poor R/R Fair R/U	I	H Very Strong R/U	Higher educated nonhead members coming from big land owner's families who have several establishments—big business, *karkers* (industry) and farms. Usually they move for doing business or well paid jobs.
HIGHLY MOBILE	M Fair R/R Fair R/U	L-I Strong R/U	H Very Strong R/U	This group includes a large number of both head and nonhead members comprising rural elites, skilled and educated persons, high officials and other salary earners, modern professionals, established business folk, big farmers etc. All of them have land which they either cultivate own, rent to sharecroppers, or both. They never exchange labour but always hire.
LESS MOBILE	M Fair R/R Poor R/U	L-I Fair R/R & R/U	L Very Strong R/U	Movers come from medium *grenasths* (peasant families), village artisians, petty traders, and some service holders' families. Most of them have land and also rent significantly. Often they work in their own field, sometimes hire labour.
HIGHLY MOBILE	H Fair R/R Poor R/U	M Fair R/R & R/U	M Very Strong R/U	This group includes a wide variety of families and occupational groups-landless labourers/nonlabourers, petty traders and mini farmers. Nearly 40% have no land. Large numbers are owner cum tenants. CMs move mainly for manual and non-manual jobs, while commuters for petty trades and wage earnings. Seasonal migrants (SMs) are mostly labourers.
LESS MOBILE	M Strong R/R	L Strong R/R	L Strong R/U	They are mainly landless destitutes, highly unskilled and aged labourers; migrate to town mostly for wage earning or lowest jobs. Commuters are largely non-agricultural day labours or small peddler traders. They do not have any means of production. Nobody rents (out) land to them.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATA
---Strata Boundary (Generalised)
Upper class 1
Upper class 2
Middle class 3
Middle class 4
Middle class 5
Lower class 6
Lower class 7

MOBILITY GROUPS
Medium mobile (A)
High mobile (B and D)
Less mobile (C and E)

RESPONSE TO MOBILITY BEHAVIOUR
H High response
M Medium response
L Low response
I Insignificant or no response

STREAM INTENSITY
(percent of total movers)
Very poor : 20 or less
Poor : 21-40
Fair : 41-60
Strong : 61-80
Very strong : 81 and above
R/R : Rural to Rural Stream
R/U : Rural to Urban Stream

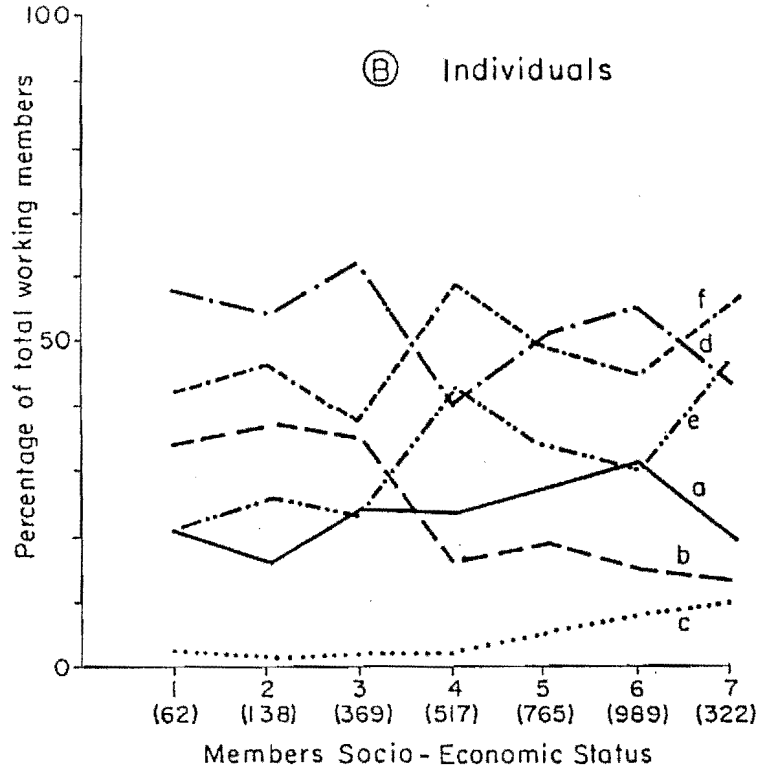
Figure 8·3

MOBILITY AND IMMOBILITY PATTERNS AT DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

Percent of households having:

a. Active commuters only
b. Active CMs only
c. Active SMs only
d. One type of active mover only (a+b+c)
e. Lifetime stayer workers

Figures in parentheses indicate total number of households



a. Active commuters
b. Active CMs
c. Active SMs
d. All active movers (a+b+c)
e. Lifetime stayer workers
f. Current stayer workers

Figures in parentheses indicate total number of working members

5/6). The relationship between socio-economic characteristics and mobility behaviour is thus quite different for the two groups.

The highly mobile villagers from the upper strata of village society are mainly involved in medium to long-term circulation, mostly non-seasonal in nature and involving absences (not continuous) from the village for a few years to the end of their working lives. These circular migrants (CMs) are generally selected from the most educated and skilled population of the village. Nearly 93 percent of them are literate and 61 percent have successfully completed at least SSC level (Table 8.5).

Over 90 percent of the CMs have migrated to towns and cities where 75 percent are engaged in higher to medium salaried non-manual services. Circular migrants in general, have the least attachment with agricultural activities, although 93 percent of them have land in their native villages. The majority of the CMs families (62 percent) in group B are fully or partly rentier.

Among all the movers from the village, they get the most benefit from rural-urban migration. Economically some of the CMs in group B are very close to borolok (the very rich class) and all the CMs, in general, are better off in an economic sense than the commuters from the same group B. Often the families of the CMs have more than two incomes e.g. land, service/ business or other.

Although these migrants are comparatively well off by village standards, they usually do not have sufficent means to opt for permanent urban residence and, therefore, they adopt a strategy of temporary to 'quasi-permanent' circulatory migration. Their movements are more innovative (Petersen 1958) than the movers from lower SE strata, because they bring new ideas to rural areas and generate change in both the lives of their families in the village, as well as changes in the community.

Commuters from group B, on the other hand, are less educated than the CMs. Their literacy rate is 83 percent and the majority are under SSC level. They commute equally to urban as well as rural areas. Rural commuters are mostly business oriented (established business) while urban commuters are service workers. Commuters operate more land than the CMs and as they live in the village, the majority (64 percent) are also engaged in part-time farming. They do not exchange labour but often work on their own farm.

Towards the base of the pyramid, another highly mobile group comprises large numbers of movers from the lower middle and gorib or poor classes (SE strata 5/6). Unlike the movers of group B, their chances of achieving a better life through the process of mobility are considered to be very small. However, what is real in their case is that they move mainly to safeguard their existing level of well-being in rural societies and

settings.

Aggregate statistics from the 14 study villages show that group D movers have a broad population base in the rural areas (Table 8.3) and this group alone accounts for 57 percent of the total active movers (Table 8.4). These movers have come from a wide variety of families and occupation groups such as landless labourers and non-labourers, mini farmers, owner cum tenant farmers, petty traders (mostly peddler), and a wide variety of low paid salary earners, factory workers and non-agricultural wage earners.

In the village, 33 percent of group D movers have no land at all. Another 30-35 percent have very little land (below 0.50 acre), but due to shortages of ploughs, draft animals, and cash they often cannot either cultivate their own land or rent others' land. In this situation, they are indirectly forced to rent out their small parcels of land to those who control the means of production. Those who have come from the lower middle class are in a slightly better position than the gorib class because fewer are landless and more have some means to rent other land.

The CMs in group D, as in group B, also have a better socio-economic condition as compared to others in this group (Table 8.5). Seasonal migrants are in the worst position. Two-thirds of them are illiterate, 60 percent landless or near landless, and nearly 80 percent depend on wage earning. Circular migrants

Table 8.3

Mobility and Immobility Patterns of Households by Socio-Economic Status[1]

Households	Socio-economic status							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total number of households	22	61	189	310	453	671	235	1941
Male head	21	61	189	309	450	660	187	1877
Female head	1	0	0	1	3	11	48	64
a) HHs with active commuters only	6	10	49	85	153	244	57	604
Percent of total households	27	16	26	27	28	36	25	31
b) HHs with active CMs only	7	23	74	56	95	98	30	383
Percent of total households	32	38	39	18	17	15	13	20
c) HHs with active SMs only	0	1	3	8	22	67	28	129
Percent of total households	0	2	2	3	4	10	12	7
d) HHs with one type of active movers only (i.e. a+b+c)	13	34	126	149	270	409	115	1116
Percent of total households	59	56	67	48	50	61	49	57
e) HHs with lifetime stayer workers[2]	10	26	66	162	197	244	116	821
Percent of total households	45	43	35	52	43	36	49	42

1 Households which have two/three types of active movers are excluded from the analysis.
2 People who had never moved for work.

Table 8.4

Mobility and Immobility Patterns of Workers
by Socio-Economic Status

Patterns	Socio-economic status							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Total Working Members	62	138	369	517	765	989	322	3162
Males	59	134	363	515	752	963	255	3041
Females	3	4	6	2	13	26	67	121
a) Active commuters	13	22	87	118	206	307	66	819
Percent of total workers	21	16	24	23	27	31	20	26
b) Active CMs	21	51	131	81	145	150	43	622
Percent of total workers	34	37	35	16	19	15	13	20
c) Active SMs	2	1	9	12	39	84	31	178
Percent of total workers	3	1	2	2	5	8	10	6
d) All active movers	36	74	227	211	390	541	140	1619
Percent of total workers	58	54	62	41	51	55	43	51
e) Lifetime stayer workers[1]	13	36	86	220	257	301	150	1063
Percent of total workers	21	26	23	43	34	30	47	34
f) Current stayer workers[2]	26	64	142	306	375	448	182	1543
Percent of total workers	42	46	38	59	49	45	57	49

1 Those who never moved for work
2 Includes lifetime stayers and 480 ex movers who were found to work around their homes.

heavily depend on urban income, mostly from low grade office jobs and wage earnings. The majority of group D movers (55 percent) are commuters who mostly move within the rural areas seeking work in small trades or non-agricultural work, mostly rickshaw pulling. Rural to urban commuters are mainly business oriented.

Less mobile population

Groups C and E are labelled as 'less mobile' which means the people of the corresponding SE strata are less likely to move from their village of residence. The two groups have different reasons for their lower propensity for mobility. In the case of group C, which includes 'true' middle class villagers, mobility rates are less than those of the upper middle class as well as lower middle class villagers (see Figure 8.3). Major reasons for their low mobility rates include: (i) most of them (over 90 percent) have some land and other means of production and thus they feel a sense of security in the village; (ii) due to poor education they have less ability (compared to the people of upper middle class) to earn more through migration than what they have already been earning in the village settings.

A close examination of movers' and stayers' economic condition shows that those who are stayers among the group C people are economically better off than those who are mobile (Table 8.5). In other words, economically, those who are close in a social sense to

Table 8.5

Some Features of Active Movers and Lifetime Stayers Within the Different Mobility Groups

Features	Mobility groups					Total
	Medium mobile A	Highly mobile B	Less mobile C	Highly mobile D	Less mobile E	
a) Percent literate						
Active commuters	92	83	76	49	15	55
Active CMs	100	93	93	69	26	77
Active SMs	100	100	67	33	25	39
All active movers	97	90	82	53	21	62
Lifetime stayers	85	83	67	41	11	48
b) Percent SSC passed and above						
Active commuters	69	33	12	3	0	9
Active CMs	76	61	33	13	0	31
Active SMs	50	20	8	1	0	3
All active movers	72	49	20	6	0	17
Lifetime stayers	62	22	9	2	0	6
c) Percent landless						
Active commuters	0	5	7	38	82	33
Active CMs	0	7	9	28	76	22
Active SMs	0	0	10	23	75	30
All active movers	0	6	8	33	79	29
Lifetime stayers	0	2	6	22	76	24
d) Average land per household (in acres)						
Active commuters	7.00	3.05	1.51	0.43	0.04	0.96
Active CMs	14.56	3.38	1.59	0.64	0.07	1.81
Active SMs	13.20	5.74	3.30	0.97	0.05	1.38
All active movers	11.43	3.33	1.64	0.56	0.05	1.31
Lifetime stayers	24.15	6.24	1.82	0.78	0.08	1.78
e) Average household size						
Active commuters	14.3	8.9	7.2	6.2	4.6	6.6
Active CMs	14.2	9.1	7.7	7.0	4.8	7.7
Active SMs	18.0	10.0	9.3	6.0	4.8	6.3
All active movers	14.6	9.0	7.5	6.4	4.7	7.0
Lifetime stayers	12.8	9.8	7.5	6.4	4.4	6.8
f) Median income of household						
Active commuters	60000	31260	17500	10200	7200	12000
Active CMs	72000	31260	18000	11400	4200	15600
Active SMs	53500	24000	16700	6600	3600	6180
All active movers	64200	28992	16800	9600	4800	11760
Lifetime stayers	72000	32400	15800	8400	3480	10200
g) Head/Non-head ratio						
Active commuters	31:69	56:44	64:36	73:27	83:17	69:31
Active CMs	19:81	34:66	46:54	43:57	53:47	41:59
Active SMs	0:100	40:60	58:42	67:33	87:13	67:33
All active movers	22:78	42:58	56:44	62:38	75:25	58:42
Lifetime stayers	31:69	41:59	54:46	51:49	61:39	52:48

the lower middle class people are more prone to move out than those who are far from them. This is conceivable in the light of Mukherjee's (1948, 669) interpretation of pyramidal social structure of rural societies. He argues that middle class families have been experiencing a gradual degradation of their socio-economic status as a result of rural overcrowding. A large number of them are being 'leached out' and added to the lower class - the class which has been swelling at an unprecedented rate.

In our study areas we found that the lower class are heavily over-represented. Nearly 47 percent of our survey households lie in this class. Large numbers might drop from the lower middle class which was also well represented in our survey communities. At the bottom of the pyramid (mobility group E) are people known as sorbohara (destitute) class. In the 14 study villages we found 235 sorbohara families; one-fourth of them are headed by poor widows. From 74 to 82 percent of them have no land at all. The overwhelming majority of these families (80-89 percent) are illiterate and depended heavily on wage labour. Group E people have different reasons for their limited mobility behaviour. They have very few or no opportunities to migrate or to circulate for work from their paternal village location, and they are physically unfit for urban types of work as well as for any hard work. Further reasons for greater immobility among group E people will be discussed later

in this chapter.

The other villagers

The individuals or families which belong to group A are the most wealthy class by village standards and they are called borolok or dhani in rural Bangladesh. They are the smallest group who lie at the apex of the social pyramid. In the eyes of many villagers the dhanis are those 'who sit and eat' and 'whose hands are soft'.

In Figure 8.3 it is evident that group A members are less likely to move out from their villages compared to group B people but more likely to do so in comparison with groups C and E. Further analysis of data indicates that in group A the movers tend to come from non-head members (Table 8.5) and they prefer rural-urban circular migration. The heads of household, on the other hand, are more prone to immobility as compared to head members of other groups (Mahbub 1984). Thus, taking both heads and non-heads into account, we considered group A as having a 'medium' level of mobility.

The head and non-head members of group A have their own reasons for a differential pattern of movement. Although the head members have a fair opportunity to live anywhere, they are usually less prone to conventional types of temporary or periodic movements than those in groups B and D. In the village

they have enough resources, established businesses, big farms, and higher socio-political positions, which they do not want to lose through migration to towns.

On the other hand, their migration-prone sons are mostly well educated, young, and have aspirations for modern life. In the village, their families are big in size and they are quite aware than when they are separated from their parents' household, they will get a small share of the wealth. In this regard it seems that, when they establish their own households, their SE status will drop from group 1 to 2 or even lower following the same principle (i.e. gradation/ degradation of socio-economic status within the pyramidal social structure) that we have partly discussed with reference to group C.

In the village surveys it was found that a significant number of sons had dropped from the rich class, particularly when they separated from their parents. Citing an example from Bahimara village in Dhaka district, Jansen (1983, 68) noted that:

> The break-up of the households and the division of the land leads to a very critical period for the new households which are established, and at this stage the foundation is laid for the social and economic position of a new household.

8.2.2 Discussion

The observed relationship between mobility behaviour and social structure suggests that in these rural communities, people originating from different

socio-economic positions adopt different patterns of movement to maintain their livelihood. Within the pyramidal structure those who are in either the higher or the lower socio-economic strata have higher rates of mobility than those who lie at the top, middle and bottom levels. The evidence suggests that earning males from the upper strata are more prone to circular migration, whereas those coming from the lower socio-economic positions are more likely to make short-term movements such as commuting and seasonal movements.

The poor and the rich

The reasons why poor villagers prefer commuting and/or are unable to migrate in a greater number were examined in Chapter 6. Poor income, low education/ skills, small family size and hand to mouth living conditions have deterred many families from sending their sons or principal earners to towns as migrant workers. Many part-time farmers also consider commuting a viable alternative to migration. Commuting facilitates the earning of off-farm income by peasants who do not want to lose their farm employment.

In four Indian villages, Kothari (1980, 262) has considered poverty as the crucial element in low rates of migration among the poor. Factors such as low education, insufficient resources to support migration, apathy, feelings of insecurity and low level of aspirations account for the low mobility. The same author also noted that many potential migrants belonging

to the lower-stratum families might not be able to migrate because in the village there is some fear among the poor households that once children leave the village they will not continue to share their earnings with their parents. In these circumstances it is more likely that some poor families may exert pressure on their children (mostly sons) to remain at home, or to undertake a home-based movement like commuting.

On the other hand, a number of studies have suggested that rural-urban migration acts for the richer families as a tool to diversify their sources of income. As Michael Lipton (1980, 7) has pointed out:

> Rural emigration in LDCs is of two types: that in which better-off countryfolk use their surpluses (accumulated as education, cash or other assets) to buy into the urban scene, with its prospects to further accumulation; and that in which the poorer (but seldom the poorest) villagers seek to make up for the land deprivation, high rents, and labour-replacing technologies associated with the concentration and use of surpluses by the better-off in their villages of origin.

Household size and composition also acts as an important catalyst for the out-migration of earning males from the richer families. Generally, in the rural areas the larger households are economically better-off as they have more earning members and other accumulated resources e.g. land, cattle, capital etc. Having more resources and man-power, the large joint or extended families can thus invest their surplus labour in rural-urban migration. Moreover, these households can afford the costs, risks and delayed returns associated with

migration (Kothari 1980, 273). Therefore, a person belonging to a relatively prosperous household is more likely to be a circular migrant than one from a poor family in the lower classes.

The two flows of movers, the poor and the rich, are clearly discernible from several recent studies as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. These studies have mostly been concerned with rural-urban migration. The range of empirical knowledge on the relationship between socio-economic structure and commuting behaviour of rural people is much smaller. Little explicit attention has also been given to the total mobility behaviour of those earning members who belong to the top, middle and bottom of the social pyramid (SE stratum 1, 4 and 7).

Many, though not all, believe that the villagers who are very poor (SE stratum 7) are the chief source of slum and squatter populations in towns and cities, and thus the rural destitute families might have a rather higher rate of migration. This viewpoint is more relevant to some Latin American countries where the rate of urbanization is relatively high, or some African regions where severe natural catastrophes such as prolonged drought and advancing sand dunes drive the destitute to shanty towns. But in the case of Bangladesh, one of the poorest countries in the world where more than 85 percent of the population still remain in villages, the rate of rural-urban migration

among the poorest sector of rural society cannot be high.

In Bangladesh, a very poor village household usually has the following economic disadvantages: very little or no land, no plough and cattle, debts, few income earners (often an old age male or under age children or a widowed woman), and highly insecure employment with a very low cash return. One common reason for less mobility among the poorest villagers is their ill health which in most cases makes them unfit for urban hard work. So they are bound to remain in the village and seek light work on the farms of relatives and neighbours. With a very low income, they cannot afford to buy more food, and are caught in a vicious circle of poverty, malnutrition and impaired labour power (Harrison 1981, 265).

Given the above situation which is very common in rural Bangladesh, many impoverished or pauperized families do not want to leave their village for several reasons. In the first place they fear that once they move to town someone will take over their homestead plot and they will not be able to return. They are also frightened about the possibility of losing social and economic support (e.g. receiving loans, employment and help in children's marriage matters) from their village relatives and friends as it is difficult to get such support in town society.

A recent study has explained how the poor and

very poor families, through "patron-client" relationships, are preoccupied with survival and are less likely to leave their home village and relatives (Jansen 1983, Chapter 4). In the present framework of economic, social and political conditions, for many poor and destitute villagers there is no option but to stay and starve in the village. As one poor villager bitterly remarked: 'They (better-off villagers) don't allow us to die, but neither do they allow us to live...' (Van Schendel 1981, 90).

Socio-economic degradation

The relationship between socio-economic strata and mobility behaviour of villagers is not static and it is necessary to explain the dynamics of class mobility within the pyramidal social structure. The general characteristics of this type of pyramidal social structure and the opportunities for upward or downward social mobility have been described by Mukherjee (1948) and more recently by Van Schendel (1981) and Jansen (1983). The upper class, which is characterized by a concentration of land and income, seldom gets people who have been slightly upgraded from the middle class.

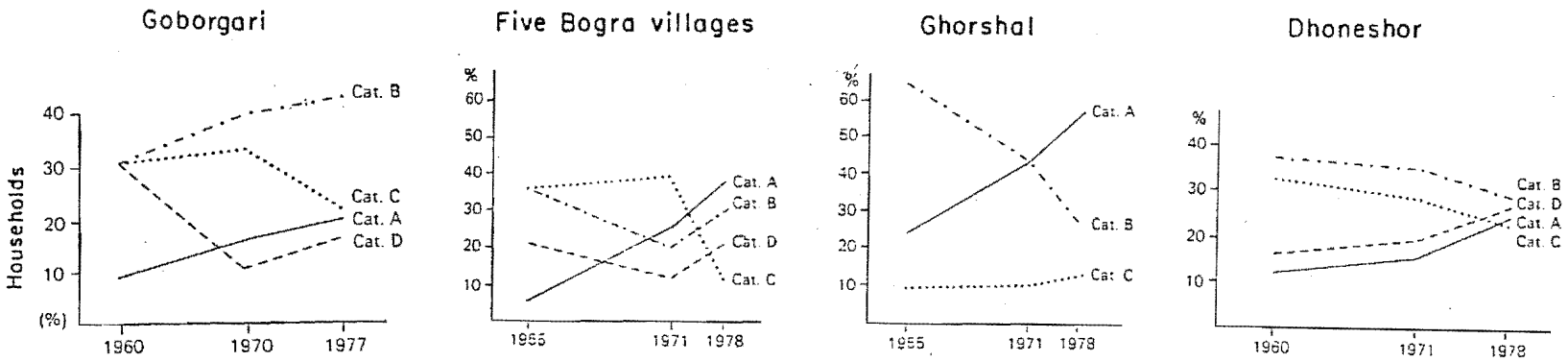
The lower class people are poor peasants who have been divorced from their land. They have come from middle class families which have been gradually degrading as a result of rural overcrowding. Mukherjee (1948) described the middle class as the self-sufficient peasantry in rural Bengal. But today, four decades

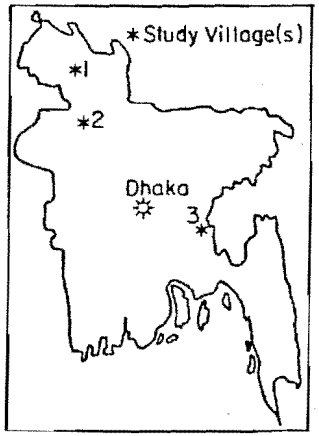
after his survey, the bulk of the middle class families undoubtedly belong to a dependent peasantry. It is also evident that a large number of families from the middle class are being 'leached out' and added to the lower class - the class which has been swelling rapidly. Over time, class mobility in Bangladesh shows a net downward trend leading to pauperization (if not proletarization) through the disintegration of the middle class. This is clearly evident from Van Schendel's study (see Figure 8.4). Generally, the poorer the country, the smaller is the middle class and the greater the polarization between the upper and lower classes.

The consequences of this socio-economic degradation are severe. There has been a rapid increase in the proletariat group, and growth in a range of tensions (social, economic and political) which have relevance to population circulation and migration. In such a situation a complex space-time mobility pattern is likely for the proletariat group. The distance, duration and direction of their shuttle-movement will be determined mainly by the availability of employment at the home village, in the rural markets and nearby towns and cities. The nature and availability of transportation facilities will also influence movement patterns. Proletariat females will join with their male peer-group in the same sort of circular mobility which has recently been indicated for the poor and

Figure 8·4

UPWARD AND DOWNWARD ECONOMIC MOBILITY OF VILLAGE HOUSEHOLDS BY ECONOMIC CATEGORY





1 Goborgari (Rangpur district)
2 Five villages and Ghorshal village in Bogra district
3 Dhoneshor (Comilla district)

Category A : Households unable to provide for themselves for twelve months at a very low standard of living.....they regularly starved.

Category B : Households just managing to provide for themselves for twelve months at a very low standard of living.....

Category C : Households able to provide for themselves for twelve months at a moderate standard of living..... , and from one to three months in excess.

Category D : Households able to provide for themselves for twelve months at a comfortable standard of living..... , and for more than three months in excess.

Source: Van Schendel (1981)

overcrowded regions of the country (Begum 1979; Chen 1986).

Finally, non-mobile or less mobile groups will be forced to become more mobile. In this regard there will be a small number of families in group C who will work only at the home village. The poorest sector of the village population (group E) will have no option but to leave for the cities as destitutes. As a result of the latter trend, the rural-urban stream of movement is likely to expand at an unprecedented scale.

8.3 CONCLUSION

A growing number of researchers (e.g. Lipton 1980, Connell et al. 1976, Chaudhury 1983, Boer 1981 etc.) argue that rural out-migration is not only caused by rising inequality among the village families but that it is also in itself a cause of inequality. In common with wealth and education, migration has a polarising effect on village social stratification.

Boer (1981, 28) has observed that migration is one of the mechanisms by which the less rigid social structure in Bangladeshi villages is being changed into a more rigid structure in which the opportunities for upward mobility for the village poor and the risks of downward mobility for the rich decrease. Analysing the socio-economic achievements of village migrants in Bangladesh, Chaudhury (1983, 71) concluded:

> ...(The) current migration patterns and processes (in Bangladeshi villages) are income

> regressive, widens the income and productivity gap and reinforces polarisation in rural areas. In the absence of progressive intervention, migration will reinforce existing economic stratification and its related negative human impacts - malnutrition, ill health, low worker productivity and violence.

In the light of these conclusions it can be said that in rural Bangladesh in the mid-1980s the upward and downward mobility of a household is, to a large degree, dependent on the family's economic achievements gained through the migration process. Given a severe scarcity of local resources (land and employment) and an extremely high man-land ratio in the countryside, rural-urban circulation has become a very important mechanism by which a livelihood is secured for many village households. However, as we have already seen, the opportunities for upward mobility by dint of migration achievements are not equal across households or individuals.

Except for the rich, only a few aggressive individuals or families, mostly from the middle class, may manage to rise in the socio-economic hierarchy. For most others population movement affords an opportunity to maintain a family's or individual's existing standard of living, perhaps for the time being. It can delay the process of socio-economic degradation that has become characteristic of social change in rural Bangladesh.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

Population circulation is not a new phenomenon in the history of the relocation process of human beings (see Prothero and Chapman 1985, Chapter 1). However, it was not until the 1940s that scientific inquiry into circular mobility commenced. Since the 1960s in particular, circulation in population movement has received increasing attention in migration literature, especially that dealing with mobility in many Third World countries where societies are still predominantly rural-based in residence, employment and culture. It has been established that this particular process of movement is prevalent among the indigenous peoples of Africa, Melanesia and Southeast Asia (Chapman and Prothero 1985). Researchers now argue that much of the population movement in many other regions of Asia, including Bangladesh, is temporary or circular in nature (Prothero and Chapman 1985).

This concluding chapter discusses briefly the relevance of circular mobility in Bangladesh in the light of our findings from village surveys. The most significant results derived from the field inquiries are summarized and some shortcomings associated with the approach adopted in this research are reviewed. Finally, some suggestions are made concerning further research on mobility in Bangladesh and elsewhere.

9.1 CIRCULATION: AN ENDURING FORM OF POPULATION MOVEMENT

The basic pattern of movement of working people originating from rural areas in Bangladesh is circular, involving temporary displacement from a village home base rather than the conventional linear type of permanent relocation. Traditionally the pattern includes three broad types of circular movements: commuting, circular migration and seasonal migration. Permanent relocation caused by inadequate income opportunities in native villages usually follows some experience of circular mobility.

9.1.1 The rationale for circulation

Circulation seems to dominate the internal migration process in Bangladesh and other South Asian countries (Skeldon 1984). Previously the volume of this movement was relatively small and mostly confined within rural settlements (Chapter 2) but in recent decades both the magnitude and direction of reciprocal flows have proliferated. More recently, circulation has become an integral part of the life cycle of most earning men of rural households (Chapter 3). Despite heavy reliance on agriculture as a means of livelihood, drastic changes have been taking place in rural areas leading to a large scale adoption of dual or multiple occupation strategies by rural families. This has resulted in an accelerating rate of circulation of household earning members between village domicile and

urban or rural workplaces.

Increasing landlessness, un/underemployment and poverty, which are associated mainly with a high rate of population growth and a skewed distribution of land in terms of ownership, imply that the survival of many households in rural Bangladesh is, in fact, largely dependent on continued access to urban sources of income and the availability of a large number of non-agricultural jobs within the rural regions. Since Bangladesh is very poor in resource terms and has a very large peasant population, the government cannot afford to create millions of off-farm jobs required for the huge surplus labour force in the agricultural sector. In such a situation, there is relentless competition for scarce resources (such as land and employment) among the villagers (Jansen 1983, Boyce and Hartmann 1981, 26).

For many village families, especially those coming from middle and lower income groups, stable sources of income and opportunities to utilize household labour fully, are becoming increasingly difficult to acquire. Such families are heavily dependent on "fragmented occupations" in which they acquire employment or income from the land, rural markets or nearby towns. As the supply of jobs in any occupation is much lower than the demand for work, the income from a single job or 'piece of work' remains insufficient and villagers often engage in two or three jobs or 'pieces of work' to satisfy their basic socio-economic needs. The growing

importance of this dual or multiple occupation strategy in rural Bangladesh has been stressed in many recent studies (Jansen 1983, Van Schendel 1981, Hartmann and Boyce 1983, and Chen 1986).

The most common mixture of economic activities in rural Bangladesh are farming plus employment for money in towns, village markets and thana centres (Chapter 6). Villagers who travel to these hubs of commercial activity usually follow a definite pattern of circular mobility such as commuting, circular migration and seasonal migration (Chapters 4 and 5). A general trend evident in the three locations is that circular mobility is growing in importance in association with the growth of dual occupation practices. It can be argued that the importance of circular mobility in rural Bangladesh will continue to increase in the foreseeable future. Such an assumption is supported by the simple fact that Bangladesh, although a small country, has a 'giant' rural population[1] and many individuals will have to adopt circular mobility strategies if they are to survive in either rural or urban locations.

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1 In terms of total population size Bangladesh is placed eighth in the world, but the country has the fourth largest rural population in the world. Only China, India and Indonesia have larger rural populations than Bangladesh. None of these countries has such a high proportion of the total population living in rural areas and dependent on agriculture for livelihood (Khan 1977, 137, Jones 1978). In 1980, the proportion of rural population for Bangladesh was 88.8 percent as against 73.9, 77.7 and 79.8 percent found in China, India and Indonesia respectively (UN 1980b).

Zelinsky's (1971) argument that circulation is only a stage in the mobility transition, and is linked to particular processes and phases of socio-economic change (notably urbanization, modernization, and industrialization) has limited relevance in the context of a society such as Bangladesh where, as mentioned before, a vast proportion of the population is rural-based and will continue to be so for a long time. Some investigators (Bedford 1971, Chapman and Prothero 1977, Hugo 1978a, Mantra 1981, Young 1984) have criticized Zelinsky's hypothesis and they have proposed that circular mobility is a long-term phenomenon rather than transitional. Chapman and Prothero (1977, 5) have argued: 'Circulation, rather than being transitional or ephemeral is a time-honored and enduring mode of behaviour, deeply rooted in a great variety of cultures and found at all stages of socio-economic change.' Young (1984, 225) has suggested that, owing to entrenchment of inequalities, uneven development and incomplete transformation of economy, circular mobility exists and will persist in many Third World countries.

Apart from the debate about whether circulation is in fact a transitory or an enduring form of population movement, a growing number of researchers (Mantra 1981, Hugo 1978a, Ulack et al. 1986) consider circular mobility as a viable substitute for permanent relocation or for total immobility. The present study has arrived at a similar conclusion and

has revealed that this particular form of movement is essential for increasing numbers of rural Bangladeshis, especially the poor, agricultural labourers, small peasants, part-time farmers, unskilled or less skilled groups, and families with fewer income earners. These people can neither leave their village for good due to lack of adequate income and stable employment at their destination place nor stay at home permanently as they do not have sufficient means of living (land and employment) in their native village.

9.1.2 The components of circulation

In the study villages circular movement was divided into three major categories: commuting, circular migration and seasonal migration. These types of population movement have all been practised by villagers in Bangladesh for a long time. Generally, the former two mobility behaviours are very common in almost all rural regions while the latter is more likely to be found among labourers in poorer regions. In the three survey areas, movers from Rampal and Chandina tended to prefer commuting to circular migration; the incidence of seasonal migration had become insignificant in these two regions. In Sakhipur, on the othr hand, circular migrants and seasonal migrants outnumbered commuters. The relative importance of commuting, circular migration and seasonal migration in each survey area was found to depend upon several factors. Most

important in this regard were the region's location, transport infrastructure including rural-urban links and, above all, agricultural practices and land use.

During the last three or four decades the movement pattern of household earning members in all areas has become more circulatory in nature. In other words there has been a shift from seasonal and long-term circulation to short-term frequent circulation such as commuting. The field of commuting and circular migration has enlarged greatly while the scope of seasonal migration, particularly the intra-rural stream, has been reduced substantially. It was also found that over the last few decades circular migration has increased more rapidly than any other movement type and this trend is likely to parallel the steady increase in the size and proportion of the population that is urban-based.

Numerous studies have indicated that inadequate wages, shortage of land, and an unequal distribution of farm holdings are the real explanations for rural out-migration in many agrarian societies. However, very few studies consider the precise relationship between forms of mobility and regional agriculture structure (Prothero and Chapman 1985, 21). The rate and incidence of commuting and migration (seasonal and non-seasonal) are to a large degree also dependent on a range of agricultural factors such as cropping pattern, intensity of cultivation, tenural system, and level of

access to improvements in technology (i.e. degree of success in the 'green revolution'). In an agrarian society such as Bangladesh, these factors have a major influence on the mobility strategies of household members.

In rural areas households have different levels of agricultural involvement which is accomplished in various ways through using male man-power of the family, hiring labour, renting (in or out) land or a combination of these processes. It was found that commuting has become of immense significance in regions like Rampal and Chandina where agriculture is intensive and villagers have opportunities to cultivate cash crops using modern seed, fertilizer and irrigation technologies. Proximity to large urban centres and improved transport links with cities, towns and large rural markets are considered to be important requisite factors which facilitate frequent movements of agricultural products and people, thus leading to a higher rate of commuting. On the other hand, in a poor region such as Sakhipur, which is characterised by traditional agriculture and poor infrastructure, there are usually higher rates of seasonal migration.

Empirical evidence from the villages of India and Bangladesh (see Connell et al. 1976, Kothari 1980, and Chaudhury 1978a) suggests that in the poor or less developed villages a high rate of out-migration is likely while in the more developed villages (often

indicated by improvements in agricultural technology) the propensity to migrate is reduced by the provision of more regular employment in farming and a wider range of job opportunities. Studies showing the propensity of commuting movement in more developed and less developed villages are scarce. Therefore, it is difficult to suggest that in India villages within the green revolution belt may have a high rate of commuting as found in Rampal and Chandina in Bangladesh. A point should be noted here that population mobility is a complex, multivariate phenomenon and generalizations based on a single variable are likely to fail. For example, the man-land ratio of Kothari's study villages in the Punjab (India) is much lower than the ratios found in Rampal and Chandina. Furthermore, the practice of dual occupation, which is positively correlated with a high rate of commuting in Bangladeshi villages, may not be so important in the case of the Punjabi villages.

Evidence from this study, as well as from research in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, indicates that the pattern, process and the magnitude of commuting among rural people depends, to a great extent, on the local agricultural calendar. Several studies also suggest that with the development of infrastructure and modes of production, commuting gradually becomes a substitute for migration in many Third World countries (Hugo 1978a, Mantra 1981, Ulack et al. 1986, UN 1977,

1982b, 2). This proposition is important in the case of Bangladesh where the overwhelming majority of people live in rural areas and they depend increasingly on a mixture of agricultural and non-agricultural activities for their livelihood.

Elkan (1967) showed in his African studies that the growth of towns can take place in several ways: an increase in the number of permanent inhabitants, a growing number of temporary migrants, or longer stays by migrants. He found that since the 1960s the growth of towns in East Africa has been caused predominantly by the latter two. This finding obviously indicates the immense significance of circulation in explaining the urbanization process in many countries, especially where the rate of urbanization is low and circulation has been the dominant feature of rural-urban population movement. Recently Skeldon (1984, 28) has stressed the profound impact that rural-urban circulators or a 'bi-local' population have in urban growth in South Asia.

Results from field surveys in rural Bangladesh indicate that the overwhelming majority of the circular migrants (90 percent) were directed towards urban centres. Almost 50 percent of the seasonal migrants and the same proportion of commuters also moved to cities and towns for livelihood. In 1981 when this survey was conducted, one-third of the total household earning members were involved in economic activities in towns. The major forces behind this drift to the

cities may be known to many experts and policy makers (see Chapters 3 and 4) but the incidence of circulation in rural-urban mobility, and its contribution to urban growth, have not been documented by census surveys. As a result, it is widely believed that the conventional census surveys have greatly underestimated the volume of rural-urban mobility in Bangladesh.

9.1.3 Social class and mobility strategies

The movement of people for economic reasons is an integral part of the complex process of socio-economic change in rural communities. It is a means by which an increasing number of families maintain or improve their socio-economic standing in the rural setting. For at least a decade a group of researchers have explained rural out-migration in the context of unequal distribution of land, income and education attainment among rural families, and have suggested that the propensity to leave villages is higher among households that are either poor or rich (see Chapter 8).

On the basis of empirical analysis it has been found that in rural Bangladesh, people from different socio-economic classes follow different patterns of movement for earning a livelihood. The pattern of mobility for all male earning members is bi-modal which indicates that within the pyramidal social structure those individuals (or households) who are in either the higher or the lower socio-economic strata have higher

rates of mobility than those who lie at the top, middle and bottom levels (Figure 8.2). The poorest villagers and the "middle class" people are classified as less mobile groups. At the top of the socio-economic pyramid the richest, in general, have medium levels of mobility. The detailed patterns as shown in Figure 8.3 also suggest that earning males from the upper strata are more attracted to circular migration, whereas those coming from the lower socio-economic strata are more likely to make short-term movements such as commuting and seasonal migration.

In Chapter 8, it was also shown that within the pyramidal social structure there was a net trend downwards in social status and this was manifesting itself in massive pauperization and semi-pauperization through the disintegration of the middle class. As a result, the study suggests that the space-time pattern and rate of population movement in future will be dominated even more by the mobility strategies of the lower classes.

9.2 SHORTCOMINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

This study has attempted to present a comprehensive assessment of contemporary mobility behaviour of household earning members in three rural locations in Bangladesh. It is a pioneering study in Bangladesh, in the sense that it highlights the significance of circulation or repetitive movement which

is now generally accepted as the dominant type of population movement in many Third World countries. The study has demonstrated the utility of differentiating between concepts of commuting, circular migration, seasonal migration and other forms of mobility (see Table 2.1) in order to place the process of population movement in rural Bangladesh in relevant social and economic contexts. Meaningful distinctions were also needed to identify movers from stayers, active movers from previous movers or returnees, and circular migrants from permanent migrants.

Although the primary focus of the thesis was the mobility behaviour of commuters and circular migrants, data on other forms of movers and stayers were also collected and briefly analysed. More intensive examination of these other groups would further our understanding of mobility in Bangladesh. There is a need for close investigation of returnees and permanent migrants if we are to understand better the extent to which circular migration is a substitute for permanent relocation.

It is generally believed that the spread of green revolution technology in many parts of Asia and elsewhere has reduced the propensity for rural out-migration. But we know little about the detailed implications of this particular technology for the total pattern of population mobility in a green revolution area. Evidence from Rampal and Chandina suggests that

the improvement of agriculture through intensive cultivation of hybrid rice or cash crops is encouraging people to make short-term, short-distance commuting moves. However, the relationship between population mobility and modernization of agriculture is very complex and variable from one region to another (Hugo 1984). It is an area which should be studied intensively using both prospective and retrospective approaches.

Few studies have examined the flows of working people as a function of household socio-economic status. Such an approach would assist with the generation of mobility theory which takes account of class structure. The subject is highly complex and requires intensive empirical inquiries. Longitudinal approaches would best probe the nature of changing class status.

Another area of research, particularly relevant to circular movement from rural areas, concerns the household social and economic characteristics. The family or household, which is the primary unit of village social order, has a considerable impact on the individual's decision to commute, migrate or work at the home village. It has been emphasized in several studies that inquiry into population mobility should proceed at several levels simultaneously: individual, household and community (Chapman 1981, Watts and Prothero ND, Ojeda 1976).

Finally, it would have been useful to attempt to

measure the contribution of circular mobility to the growth of towns in Bangladesh. This was not possible in this study, but it is an important issue in those countries where census statistics underestimate both the volume of population movement and the extent of participation in the urban economy. The policy implications of circular mobility for both urban and rural planning are considerable and these need to be addressed much more explicitly in another study.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Socio-Economic Indicators for Bangladesh

Indicators (unit)	Level	Year	Data source
LAND			
1 Area (square mile/km)	55598/144000	1981	Census 1981
2 Population density (per square mile/km)	1617/624	1981	"
3 Population density (per square mile/km of net cropped area)	2719/1050	1981	Computed from Census 1981 and BBS 1984,196-97
4 Per capita arable land (in acre/ha)	0.22/0.09	1983	Calculated from BBS 1984
5 Percentage of rural household own no cultivable land (in %)	34.2	1981	Census, 1981, 184
6 Percentage of rural household own cultivable land (in %)	65.8	1981	"
7 Percentage of urban household own cultivable land (in %)	33.2	1981	"
POPULATION			
8 Population[1] (million)	89.9	1981	Census 1981
9 Urban population (% of total population)	15.2	1981	"
10 Population growth rate (average annual, exponential)	2.32	1974-81	"
11 Urban population growth rate (average annual, exponential)	10.6	1974-81	"
12 Projected population 2000 A.D. (low, medium and high assumption, in millions)	131.7/139.7/ 142.1	2000	"

contd.

Indicators (unit)	Level	Year	Data source
13 Projected urban population (in percent of total population)	35.66	2000	Census 1981
14 Proportion of Muslim and Hindu population (in %)	86.6/12.1	1981	"
15 Total fertility rate	6.1	1983	ESCAP 1984
16 Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live birth)	139.6	1975-80	UN 1984,146
17 Sex ratio (male over 100 female)	106	1981	Census 1981
18 Sex ratio of urban population	126.3	1981	"
19 Median age for male and female (in years)	17	1981	"
20 Life expectancy (in years) Male/Female	55/54	1981	BBS 1984, 100
21 Average household size by residence (rural/urban/total)	5.7/5.9/ 5.7	1981	Census 1981
22 Average number of dependents per household	4.5	1973/74	UN 1981a, 199
23 Dependency ratio[2] (in percentage)	109	1981	Census 1981
EDUCATION			
24 Literacy rate, aged 5 years and above (male/female/total) in percent	31/16/23.8	1981	"
25 Proportion of male literate people who completed SSC and above by residence (rural/urban/total)	11.4/27.9/ 15.3	1981	"
26 Enrolment in primary schools (% of eligible age group)	58	1979/80	UN 1981a, 152
27 Drop-out rates: from Class I to Class II (in %)	56	recent periods	Haque 1982, 5
28 Enrolment in secondary school (% of eligible age group)	18	1977/78	UN 1981a, 155

contd.

Indicators (unit)	Level	Year	Data source
ECONOMY			
29 GNP per capita in US$ (at constant 1972/73 price and at current price)[3]	98/130	1983/84	BBS 1984, 5
30 Per capita domestic savings (US$ as of 1974 values)	6	1985	Faaland and Parkinson 1976a, 68
31 Percentage of male economically active (all ages)	49.9	1981	Census 1981
32 Percentage of female economically active (all ages)	2.8	1981	Census 1981
33 Average number of income earners per household	1.3	1973/74	UN 1981a, 199
34 Percentage of labour force in agriculture	61.3	1981	Census 1981
35 Percentage of literate population[4] work mainly non-agricultural sector	53.4	1981	Census 1981, 234
36 Percentage of illiterate population[4] work mainly in non-agricultural sector	31.4	1981	"
OTHERS			
37 Proportion of farm households are either tenant or owner-tenant (%)	35	1977	BBS (ND)
38 Percentage of urban population own house (for dwelling)	64.3	1981	Census 1981, 181
39 Percentage of population below poverty line[5]/extreme poverty line[5]	84.6/53.6	1970s	Government of Bangladesh (1980)

1 1981 census enumerated and adjusted population are 87.1 and 89.9 million respectively.
2 Ratio of population of age 0-14 and 60 and above to population of working ages 15-59 years, expressed in percentage.
3 In Taka equivalent, 788 Tk. and 3211 Tk. respectively.
4 Population 10 years and over who gainfully work in agricultural and non-agricultural sector.
5 Defined by the minimum calories requirement of 2122 calories and 1805 calories respectively.

Appendix 2

General Trends of Part-Time Farming in Bangladesh 1950-1980

Percentage of total respondents reporting off-farm work for 100 days/year

District	1950 (%)	1960 (%)	1970 (%)	1980 (%)
Dhaka	12	29	43	89
Mymensingh	9	32	61	96
Tangail	9	31	61	96
Faridpur	11	32	51	84
Chittagong	9	26	60	84
Chittagong H.T.	10	40	56	89
Noakhali	13	33	58	95
Comilla	12	31	58	93
Sylhet	14	42	56	96
Rajshahi	6	27	48	79
Dinajpur	6	29	50	78
Rangpur	6	18	48	74
Bogra	6	21	44	74
Pabna	8	31	59	79
Khulna	5	33	58	72
Barisal	6	34	56	84
Patuakhali	6	34	58	79
Jessore	5	33	56	72
Kushtia	5	17	48	84
Bangladesh	8.4	30.3	51	84

Source: Ali (1980, 29).

The study, in 1980, interviewed 2140 randomly selected farm families taking 340 families from 34 villages in Dhaka district and 100 families from one village in each of the other 18 districts in Bangladesh.

Appendix 3

Seasonality of Employment and Unemployment: Village Sabilpur, Noakhali, Bangladesh 1961-62[1]

Season		Farm work (a)		Non-farm work (b)		Total gainful employment (a+b)		Unemployed (c)		Total available man days (a+b+c)	Man days non available for work due to illness, rains, social functions etc.	
Month	Four-week Periods	No. of man days employed	Intensity 2710=100	No. of man days employed	Intensity 758.5=100	No. of man days	Intensity 3021.5=100	No. of man days	Intensity 1466.5=100		No. of man days	Intensity 342=100
July	1	1249	46	736.5	97	1985.5	66	767.5	52	2753	270	79
August	2	1352	50	567	75	1919	64	833	57	2752	342	100
September	3	976	36	694	91	1670	55	1210.5	83	2880.5	218.5	64
October	4	747.5	27	758.5	100	1506	50	1416.5	97	2922.5	191.5	56
November	5	804.5	30	692.5	91	1497	50	1466.5	100	2963.5	169.5	50
December	6	1340.5	49	616	81	1956	65	954	65	2910	181.5	53
January	7	1318.5	49	643.5	85	1962	65	960	65	2922	102	30
February	8	1342.5	50	730	96	2072.5	69	813.5	55	2886	152	44
March	9	1592	59	674	89	2066	68	534.5	36	2600.5	222.5	65
April	10	1979.5	73	535	71	2514	83	412.5	28	2926.5	111	32
May	11	2385	88	487	64	2872	95	199	14	3071	86	25
	12	2710	100	311.5	41	3021.5	100	44	3	3065.5	290.5	85
June	13	1917.5	71	595	78	2512.5	83	715.5	49	3228	200	58
Total		19714.5		8040.5		27755		10328		38083	2536	

1 From 1 July 1961 to 30 June 1962

Source: Habibullah (1962) quoted by Chaudhury (1978b, adapted from Table 8, 52).

Appendix 4

Age Structure of Different Groups of Males, 1981

Age group	Never-moved males[1]		Active commuters		Active circular migrants		Active seasonal migrants		All active migrants		All ex movers		Male absentees		Male resident population		Total population[2]	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-4	1163	28.3	-		-		-		-		-		52	5.5	1111	20.4	1163	18.2
5-9	834	20.3	-		-		-		-		-		48	5.1	786	14.4	834	13.1
10-14	841	20.5	15	1.9	19	3.2	1	0.6	20	2.6	-		69	7.3	832	15.3	901	14.1
15-19	427	10.4	72	8.9	69	11.5	11	6.2	80	10.3	8	1.5	135	14.3	511	9.4	646	10.1
20-24	196	4.8	105	12.9	98	16.4	26	14.6	124	16.0	15	2.8	134	14.2	343	6.3	477	7.5
25-29	156	3.8	141	17.3	122	20.4	46	25.8	168	21.6	29	5.4	152	16.1	363	6.7	515	8.1
30-34	81	2.0	106	13.0	92	15.4	27	15.2	119	15.3	32	6.1	116	12.3	226	4.1	342	5.4
35-39	61	1.5	91	11.2	71	11.8	30	16.8	101	13.0	57	10.7	85	9.0	234	4.3	319	5.0
40-44	48	1.2	84	10.3	34	5.7	10	5.6	44	5.7	49	9.2	49	5.2	178	3.3	227	3.5
45-49	58	1.4	67	8.2	38	6.3	13	7.3	51	6.6	54	10.1	40	4.2	193	3.5	233	3.6
50-54	47	1.1	53	6.5	23	3.8	8	4.5	31	4.0	57	10.7	27	2.8	162	3.0	189	3.0
55-59	42	1.0	39	4.8	19	3.2	5	2.8	24	3.1	67	12.6	24	2.5	148	2.7	172	2.7
60-64	48	1.2	16	2.0	9	1.5	1	0.6	10	1.3	53	10.0	8	0.8	121	2.2	129	2.0
65+	101	2.5	24	3.0	5	0.8	-		5	0.6	111	20.9	7	0.7	231	4.2	238	3.7
Total	4103	100	813	100	599	100	178	100	777	100	532	100	946	100	5439	100	6385	100
Median age	10		32		28		30		29		52		25		14		17	

1 Movements other than work and study purposes are not counted.
2 All male de-jure population.
- Nil.

Appendix 5

Age Specific Rates[1] (per 100 males) of
Mobility and Immobility of Males by Current Mobility Status, 1981.

Age group	Total no. of males	Immobility[3]		Mobility									
				Commuting		Circular migration		Seasonal migration[2]		Total migration		Total mobility	
		N	Rate	N	Rate	N	Rate	N	Rate	N	Rate	N	Rate
0-4	1163	1163	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5-9	834	834	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10-14	901	866	96.12	15	1.66	19	2.11	1 (281)	0.36	20	2.22	35	3.88
15-19	646	495	76.62	72	11.15	69	10.68	11 (227)	4.85	80	12.38	152	23.52
20-24	477	248	52.00	105	22.00	98	20.54	22 (154)	14.29	124	26.00	229	48.00
25-29	515	206	40.00	141	27.38	122	23.69	41 (178)	23.03	168	32.62	309	60.00
30-34	342	117	34.21	106	31.00	92	26.90	23 (114)	20.18	119	34.80	225	65.79
35-39	319	127	39.81	91	28.53	71	22.26	24 (119)	20.17	101	31.66	192	60.19
40-44	227	99	43.61	84	37.00	34	14.98	9 (82)	10.98	44	19.38	128	56.39
45-49	233	115	49.35	67	28.76	38	16.31	10 (76)	13.16	51	21.89	118	50.64
50-54	189	105	55.55	53	28.04	23	12.17	8 (59)	13.56	31	16.40	84	44.44
55-59	172	109	63.37	39	22.67	19	11.05	4 (54)	7.41	24	13.95	63	36.63
60-64	129	103	79.84	16	12.40	9	6.98	- (52)	-	10	7.75	26	20.15
65+	238	209	87.81	24	10.08	5	2.10	- (53)	-	5	2.10	29	12.18
All ages	6385	4796	75.11	813	12.73	599	9.37	153 (2077)	7.37	777	12.15	1590	24.89
Ages 15-59	3120	1621	51.96	758	24.29	566	18.14	152	14.30	742	23.78	1500	48.07

1 Immobility rates are applied for current non-movers (including all previous movers) and mobility rates for different types of movers (see also Figure 6.2).
2 For seasonal migration, data are based on Sakhipur survey villages.
3 Movements other than work purpose are not counted.

Figure in parentheses indicates total number of male population in the respective age group in Sakhipur survey villages.

Appendix 6

THE VILLAGE SURVEY

The task of surveying 14 villages was carried out by a team comprising the researcher, two field assistants, four data registrars (local) and three local guides taking one from each study location. The survey was conducted from a central rural base in each location. During the survey the researcher along with his two survey assistants resided in each study location for a period of 14-16 weeks. At the villages, investigations were conducted through different sets of questionnaires which were pre-designed to collect information at various scales - individual, household, and community. In most cases the questionnaires were pre-tested in the field before conducting the final survey.

In each field location, the investigation was carried on at several stages (Table 1) with a view to collecting information on each type of movement and also on the nature of immobility. Stage 3, which involved prospective mobility registration, was administered in the Rampal survey location. Except for the day to day mobility registration form (Appendix 9), all the questionnaires were printed in the English language. But during the interview, questions were asked in Bengali (vernacular) and answers were again written in English. Using one language for talking and another

Table 1

Stages of Field Research
(20 March 1981 to 31 May 1982)

Stage	Nature of Work	Place of Work	Time Spent (in weeks)	Interview Completion	Sampling frame and size	Type of instrument	Respondents	Information collected (or considered)
1	Village selection	Rural areas (Dhaka, Comilla, and Faridpur districts)	6 March/April 1981		Purposive selection: selected 14 villages from 3 locations taking 4 villages from Dhaka, 4 from Comilla and 6 from Faridpur district respectively (see Figure 1.1)	Secondary information; village reconnaissance; consulting experts and local informants	Experts local informants	Selection criteria considered: village size, distance from big urban centres, local and external transportation system, villagers socio-economic conditions, major economic activities, farming types and intensity, tenural system, labour circulation, and mobility behaviour of the villagers since late 1940s.
2	Household census survey	14 selected villages	8 Discontinuous (April-Nov. 1981)	Surveyed all households	Surveyed all current households (HHs) within 14 villages (Total HHs = 1941 with total popn. 12391)	Door to door interview through census schedule (See Appendix 7)	HH head or next available adult member of the family	Aggregate demographic and socio-economic information of the HH. General demographic, education, and occupation or working status of all members, current or latest mobility behaviour of the ever moving HH member.
3	Prospective mobility registration	Selected villages in Rampal (Dhaka)	52 (1 June 1981 to 31 May 1982)	14% of 293 head commuters	Stratified random* (Sample size: 40)	Prospective mobility register schedule (interviewed each commuter every week) (See Appendix 9)	Respective commuter	Recorded out and in movements of 40 selected commuters for continuous one year. For each trip data sought: destination, distance, streams, date and time of move out and move in, duration of absence (from home) and staying at destination, mode of transport, travelling time and purpose of trip. For each week, information such as no. of missing trips and cause of missing are also collected.

contd.

Stage	Nature of Work	Place of Work	Time Spent (in weeks)	Interview Completion	Sampling frame and size	Type of instrument	Respondents	Information collected (or considered)
4	Household socio-economic survey	14 selected villages	11 Discon-tinuous (May-Feb. 1981/82)	22% of total households	Surveyed all sampled stayers, commuters, returnees, and circular migrants households in 14 villages (Total sample: 431) (See Stages 5-8)	Interviewed through HH socio-economic schedule (see Appendix 8)	Respective household head	Economic: Housing and accommodation; land ownership and transfer; HH occupation, earning member, income sources, income, HH assets and belongings; Agricultural: Tenural status, land operation, major crop pattern, cropping intensity, food self-sufficiency, labour used/exchanged/hired; Others: Attitudes and opinions of head.
5	Interview with stayers	"	4 to 5 Discon-tinuous (June-Feb.) 1981/82	25% of total head stayers	Stratified random* (interviewed only those heads whose HHs had no ever moved member) (Total sample: 120, taking 40 from each survey area)	Interviewed through stayer schedule	Respective stayer	Family information: Education, occupation, tenural status and mobility behaviour of parents, sibs, and sons; Personal inquiries: Position among sibs; education, marital information, income and employment characteristics, indoor/outdoor working time, motive behind staying back to the village, social networks, opinions and attitudes of different issues on family life and community life.
6	Interview with commuters	"	"	21% of head commuters	Stratified random* (interviewed mostly head commuters) (Total sample: 120, 40 from each location)	Interviewed through commuter schedule	Respective commuter	Family information: Same as collected for stayers (Stage 5) Personal inquiries: Position among sibs, education, marital information, detail economic and working situation, partial life history survey, detail nature of commuting and motive behind commuting, opinions and attitudes of different issues.

contd.

Stage	Nature of Work	Place of Work	Time Spent (in weeks)	Interview Completion	Sampling frame and size	Type of instrument	Respondents	Information collected (or considered)
7	Interview with returnees (ex circular migrants)	"	"	57% of total returnees	Stratified random* (Total sample: 98, taking 29 from Rampal, 37 from Chandina and 32 from Sakhipur)	Interviewed through returnee schedule	Respective returnee	Family information: Same as given in Stage 5. Personal inquiries: Position among sibs, detailed current marital information, education, economic and working situation; detailed inquiry about demographic, economic, education and various aspects of movement based on important stages of circulation as well as retrospective history survey; future plan and migration satisfaction, opinions and attitudes of different issues of life.
8	Interview with circular migrant	14 selected villages and major urban destinations	6 discontinuous (May-Feb. 1981/82)	16% of of total circular migrants	Stratified random* (Total sample: 93; 27 from Rampal, 34 from Chandina and 32 from Sakhipur)	Interview through circular migrant schedule	Respective circular migrant	Same as Stage 7
9	A brief inquiry of permanent migrants (PMs)	14 selected villages	2 to 3 discontinuous 1981/82	Inquired all PMs briefly	Surveyed all 305 PM cases briefly and 120 random cases more closely	Survey conducted through a short questionnaire	Best known person(s) to the permanent migrant (from his village of origin)	Migrant's village of origin, present place of destination, stream of migration, current occupation, contact with the village of origin, approximate year of permanent migration, previous mobility behaviour, single or moved with family, and principal cause of relocation; Immediately before permanent migration: age, sex, religion, education, marital status, occupation, socio-economic position, tenural status, and membership status.

contd.

Stage	Nature of Work	Place of Work	Time Spent (in weeks)	Interview Completion	Sampling frame and size	Type of instrument	Respondents	Information collected (or considered)
10	Community survey	In each study location	"			Consultation with the community leaders/elders; Researcher's own observation; survey is conducted through structured/ open questionnaire	Selected community leaders/ elders and different cross-section of community people	Local and regional setting: physiography agro-climatic seasons, natural calamities, transportation network, relative location, of different service centres; Activities (current and retrospective): crop pattern and intensity, tenural system, non-farm occupations, wage fluctuation; Opinions and attitudes of local informants: about various forms of movements, female mobility, patterns and determinants of current and retrospective movements, effect of movement to the village, and others.

* In each survey location families were stratified into seven socio-economic status groups (Chapter 8) and samples were drawn randomly.

for writing did not cause any problems in the field because a large proportion of the respondents were illiterate and most of the interviews were conducted by the researcher himself.

Two assistants were given training for helping the researcher during the household census survey as well as for doing some basic clerical tasks such as processing and coding of data from census schedules and supervising four data registrars.

Local guides, on the other hand, were employed to accelerate the whole process of surveying and they indirectly helped in many ways - introducing us (researcher and his assistants) from door to door; preparing interview appointments with village people (resident or non-residents i.e. village out-migrants); keeping an eye on the time when the non-resident members come home for visiting so that we could interview them directly in the village; and helping the interviewee to remember past events. Furthermore, the presence of a local guide during the interview seems to be important, especially when some respondents intend to hide or hesitate to give correct answers, particularly those replies corresponding to economic matters such as landownership, means of income, crop production etc.

It is not uncommon for respondents to give false information in a situation when an unknown investigator from an urban area appears in a village and, after a short introduction, starts questioning people (Van

Schendel 1981, 31). But it is difficult for a villager to distort information in front of a local man who knows him very well. Thus the recruitment of a local guide appears to be very important, especially in the context of rural societies where people are mostly illiterate, conservative and ill-informed about modern research.

As stated in Chapter 1, the present study aimed to collect information on those movements which are related to the mover's work or his study. Based on the field definitions (Chapter 1) these two mobile groups (i.e.working movers and student movers) were classified into three distinct forms of periodic movers: commuters, seasonal migrants, and circular migrants. The rest of the villagers were grouped into non-movers or stayers. Although the main focus of the study was on two forms of movement behaviour (commuting and circular migration), other groups, including stayers, were also surveyed in order to distinguish between the different forms of mobility as well as immobility. Table 2 shows the numbers of households and individuals (earning members only) which have been enumerated and studied at different levels of depth. Within the village, data on movers and stayers were collected at three levels: individual, household, and community (Table 3).

INDIVIDUAL LEVEL OF INQUIRY

At the individual level a large number of

Table 2

Households and Individuals Surveyed in Rampal, Chandina and Sakhipur, 1981

Area	Households			Individual earning members[1]											
	Total households	Surveyed households		Total earning members (both sexes)							Sample for detailed survey (male only)				
		Census survey	Sample survey	Never moved person (stayer)	Active commuters	Active circular migrants	Active seasonal migrants	Returnees[2] (ex CMs)	Others[3]	Total	Stayers	Active commuters	Active circular migrants	Returnees	Total
Rampal	684	684	136	285	437	264	9	49	78	1122	40	40	27	29	136
Chandina	608	608	150	357	241	134	16	56	136	940	40	40	34	36	150
Sakhipur	649	649	145	421	141	224	153	45	116	1100	40	40	32	33	145
All areas	1941	1941	431	1063 (973)	819 (813*)	622 (599*)	178 (178†)	150 (149)	330 (329)	3162 (3041)	120	120	93	98	431

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate male earners.

1. Excluding unemployed persons, students and dependents (for total population see Table 3.2).
2. Excluding 22 elderly returnees who were not engaged in any economic activities.
3. Includes ex-commuters and ex-seasonal migrants who were working around home.

* Studied all in more detail

† Studied all in less detail

personal or individual factors which motivate mobility and immobility were investigated through different sets of interview schedules.

Census schedule

A complete household census survey was conducted in every selected village. This survey provided information on the basic socio-economic characteristics and the latest mobility status of each member of a household. On the basis of all individuals' mobility statuses and their socio-economic ranks, village lists of head stayers (household head), current commuters, current circular migrants, and returnees (ex-circular migrants) were made. From these stratified lists samples of stayers, commuters, circular migrants, and returnees were randomly selected for an in-depth interview (Table 2). In accordance with the field design, the detailed interviews were administered only to the male members of the village. Student movers (male or female) and female movers (moved for work or study), were found to be very insignificant in numbers, and were excluded from detailed studies accordingly. In all the cases, individuals were interviewed directly using the questionnaire relevant to their mobility status.

Stayer schedule

Altogether 120 stayers were interviewed in depth taking a sample of 40 stayers from each field location

Table 3

A List of Individual, Household and Community Variables
Abbreviated from Different Sets of Questionnaires

Individual	Household	Community
(a) All individuals (Appendix 7) Age, sex, marital status; relation to head; resident/absent; education level; occupation or working status; income from main job; mobility status; For all movers: place of birth; latest mobility behaviour, place of destination, stream, year of move, duration of movement, objective of movement; All returnees: year, cause and nature of last return; occupation at last destination. (b) Sample individuals[1] Current jobs and employment: nature of all jobs; period of engagement, employment contact, mode of payment; income from main job, total income; labour exchanged and wage rate; working days/hours - last month, last week and a week in peak season and lean season; periods unemployed and causes; Others: position among brothers; no. of children; value of inherited property; separation from parents - age at separation, marital status, no. of years after marriage and after employment; Opinion/attitudes: future plan for living; ideal marriage age and education for boys/girls; ideal no. of children per couple; ever adopted birth control; support female outdoor job, co-education; involvement with any association.	(a) All households (Appendix 7) Household type and size; tenural status; cultivated land owned; net operated land; food self-sufficiency; household income, nature and nos of income sources; chowkidary (local) tax group; labour utilisation; housing condition; socio-economic status. (b) Sample individuals' households (Appendix 8) Household age; house structure, value of house(s), method of ownership, accommodation satisfaction; Land: sold, bought and net transaction during last 10 years; agricultural land owned and method(s) of ownership; gross and net operated land; land rented in/out, methods of renting and cause of renting; percent of land under cereals, cash crops and HYV crop; Others: household total income, nature of income sources and no. of earners; labour utilisation; exchange and hire; education level; occupation nature; tenural status and mobility behaviour of father and ever moved brothers and sons; Opinion of head: involvement in any organization; ever adopted birth control; support female outdoor job and co-education.	(a) All areas Village size; past and present population densities and literacy levels. Physical characteristics: physiography, soil fertility; agro-climatic season; natural calamities; relative location of the area in terms of various service centres (haat/thana/school/towns etc.). Activities (past/present): crop pattern - food crop, cash or commercial crop, hybrid crop; cropping/farming intensity; non-farm activities; tenural system or arrangement; labour utilization, wage system and mode of payment. Opinions: degree of satisfaction with community facilities and services (local and regional. Population mobility (past/present): types, processes, streams, destinations and socio-economic groups involved; objectives, causes determinants and consequences; nature of and attitude towards female mobility; ways and means of survival for those who cannot move.

contd.

Individual	Household	Community
(c) Sample commuters Partial life history survey: age, mobility behaviour, places of destination, nature of job at destination (Appendix 10). Others: type of commuting, total period of commuting, reasons for choosing commuting than migration; cause of seasonal commuting; age and year of first commuting; advantages and disadvantages of commuting; modes of transport in journeys.	(c) Sample commuters' households Household tenural status (Appendix 10)	
(d) Sample commuters at Rampal Prospective mobility registration (data for each trip): destination, distance, streams; date and time of in/out movement; period of absence from home; duration of staying at destination; mode of transport and travelling time; purpose of trip; cause of not commuting (Appendix 9).		
(e) Sample circular migrants and returnees. Partial life history survey: age, marital status, mobility behaviour; place of destination, reasons for changing destination; cause(s) of migration and return; nature of work at destination; employment status and reason for changing job (Appendix 10); Variables for important circulation stages (first move/last move) and current status: age, marital status, education level; main job with employment status, second job; job intention and success; year and objective of move; cause of move and return; place of destination, dwelling arrangement; type, frequency and duration of home visit; frequency, methods and importance of remittance.	(e) Sample circular migrants and returnees. Household tenural status (Appendix 10) Household tenural status	Circular migration in general: major reasons behind circular fashion of migration

contd.

Individual	Household	Community
Opinions: choice of living place, cause of choice; reasons for return, level of intention to return; advantage and disadvantage of migration; significance of migration experience to personal, family and village life. (f) Sample stayers General: age at first job/work, nature of work; no. of times work changed, cause of changes; work satisfaction; place of work; Opinion: Intention of temporary migration; stream and destination; frequency of town visit - last year and last 5 years, reasons for visiting and visiting towns; ever faced any economic hardship, how did overcome; significance of immobility to personal, family and village life.		
(g) Permanent migrants (head only) Sex, religion, mobility behaviour before permanent relocation; At the time of permanent displacement: age, marital status, education, occupation; migrated single or with family; cause of migration; place of destination and stream; economic condition; Present condition: occupation, place of dwelling, relative economic condition; type of contact with place of origin; duration of permanent relocation.	(g) Permanent migrants Household economic condition and tenural status at the time of permanent migration; present economic condition.	Permanent migration in general: major causes of permanent relocation from the respective study area; space-time pattern of migration.

1 Includes 120 stayers, 120 commuters, 93 circular migrants and 98 returnees (ex-circular migrants).

(Table 2). Interviews were conducted only with heads of the households. The main reason behind the exclusion of non-head stayers was that they have a better prospect for future migration than heads who were born, raised, married, and have passed most of their lives in their native villages.

Commuter schedule

Active commuters were also surveyed in Rampal (40), Chandina (40) and Sakhipur region (40). Commuters were selected either from head or from non-head members of the household, but preference was given to the heads in the sampling procedure. This was because they accounted for two-thirds of the total current or active commuters. Longitudinal information was collected through partial life histories where a few variables were searched out (Table 3).

Prospective mobility registration

In addition to the retrospective inquiry into movement behaviour, a prospective approach was also chosen to measure the day-to-day flows of commuters. Such a research strategy is very important if one wishes to obtain reliable information about short-term highly-frequent movements over a lengthy period. But due to the limitation of time, this approach was administered only at one study location. The reason behind the selection of Rampal was that this area has long been famous for short periodic movements (such as commuting)

and it is also well placed within the daily commuting zone of the capital. Using the prospective mobility registration approach, data on daily movements of 40 selected commuters were obtained (Table 1, Appendix 9). A total of 8651 trips (daily, bi-weekly and weekly) were recorded covering a 12 month period from 1st June 1981 to 31st May 1982. Initially the plan was for 8 months registration, but the programme was extended up to 12 months with a view to covering seasonal variations in movement behaviour.

Under close supervision, the registration system was managed by four registrars (college students) recruited from each of the study villages. Each registrar was given the responsibility of recording movements of 10 commuters and he met every commuter once a week to record his movements (or cause of not moving) over the previous week. The supervisor, either the researcher or a field assistant, visited each registrar once a fortnight. He collected completed forms from the registrars and also met some of the commuters and cross-checked their movements.

Circular migrant and returnee schedules

These two groups of respondents basically have one common mobility form - circular migration. The only difference is that the circular migrants have an intention to return to a rural home in the future; while the returnees have recently returned to their village home for permanent or quasi-permanent residence.

In fact, the returnees are ex-circular migrants. Although separate schedules were administered for circular migrants and returnees, data on a large number of common individual variables (Table 3) were collected through a common set of partial life history surveys (Appendix 10) and a simple module for examining migration by stages.

In the life history survey, migrants and returnees were asked twice to recall their mobility history; firstly, since 1947 when the Indian sub-continent was divided, and secondly, from 1971 when Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) was separated from Pakistan. In the first recollection of histories, a few variables such as age, occupation, type of movements, and destination place were broadly examined over the past three decades. In the second case, the number of variables was increased to obtain some detailed histories of migration over the 1970s (Appendix 10).

During the interview, accuracy and reliability of past information was assessed through reference to notable events of the respondent's past life as well as through local and national events. Some measures were also adopted when migrants and returnees were asked to give more information on important stages of their circulation, such as first move in life, last move, conditions before last return, and current situation. This alternative approach of examining migration by

stages is important where multiple returns (not in the sense of visit) is commonly practised by the circulators.

Within the available time for this stage of the research we investigated 93 circular migrants (16 percent of total 599 male active CMs) and 98 returnees (57 percent of all returnees). The samples were taken from both head and non-head members of the households. From the sample list, the migrants were mostly interviewed directly in their village of origin, at the time when they had come to visit home within our 3-4 months period of staying at each field location. A few of them were also interviewed in Dhaka and Narayangonj urban destinations.

Permanent migrant schedules

During our field stay at the villages, a short investigation on permanent migrants from the sample villages was also undertaken. The main objective was to distinguish between the two processes of population movement - permanent migration and non-permanent circulation. Data were mainly collected from the relatives of the permanent migrants. We defined permanent relocation as full commitment to life in the place of destination and according to this definition there were 305 permanent relocations recorded in the 14 survey villages. Most of these cases (264 out of 305) involved the displacement of families rather than individuals (see Chapter 3).

HOUSEHOLD LEVEL OF INQUIRY

Social researchers very often consider the household as the primary sampling unit for collecting a wide range of demographic, economic, social and cultural information. A large number of factors which are linked with an individual's motives for mobility or immobility in fact originate from his/her household or family background. For the purpose of the present study, a 'household' is operationally defined as a socio-economic unit consisting of all persons related either by blood or marriage who usually live together in a particular village of residence within the study area, and have common house-keeping arrangements. They also normally take food from a common kitchen except when temporarily living outside the household (e.g. migrant members). In addition, permanently resident unrelated persons (such as domestic servants, orphans and foster-children), having no other households that they may claim to belong to, are also included as members of the household. A person living alone is considered as a one-person household for statistical purposes.

Household data were collected through a door-to-door census survey (Appendix 7) and a detailed socio-economic survey (Appendix 8) of a sample of 431 households (22 percent of the total 1941 households). The latter inquiry includes all households in our individual case studies (described in the previous section) - i.e. 120 stayers, 120 commuters, 93 circular

migrants, and 98 returnees. The census survey obtained some aggregate socio-economic data on each household within the 14 villages, whereas the detailed household investigation collected more information on socio-economic aspects as well as some other variables (Table 3). Besides census and household surveys, some information on education, occupation, tenural status and mobility behaviour of fathers, brothers and sons of individual respondents (movers or stayers) was also collected from individual schedules (stages 5 to 8, Table 1).

The most difficult task when collecting household-level data in rural Bangladesh (or elsewhere in a similar village situation) is to arrive at an accurate estimate of household income. Perhaps this could be the most likely reason why many researchers, who have thoroughly studied the socio-economic condition of village households (notably Van Schendel 1981, Jansen 1983, Arens and Van Beurden 1977, Hartmann and Boyce 1983, and Cain 1978)did not undertake the arduous task of calculating household income. In Chapters 7 and 8 (sections 7.4 and 8.3) the complexity of measuring income in village societies where most families are involved in farm and off-farm economic pursuits, and receive income in cash as well as in kind, is explained.

The income from land is not a simple function of the amount of land owned or controlled by a family. It

varies from region to region, year to year and one household to another depending on a number of factors, notably the quality or fertility of land, cultivation skills, choice of crop and above all the weather factor. A large proportion of rural households also derive at least part of their annual income from irregular or changeable income sources (e.g. casual wage work, vending small articles in the markets and making handicrafts). Here a brief explanation of the procedure that was applied in the field for estimating household income is given.

To unravel the complicated income issue the first step was to hold separate meetings with community people, different occupation groups and members of poor families who very often had no fixed or regular income sources. In those gatherings we discussed, along with other things, the process and pattern of economic activities: specifically the wage rates, its fluctuation and payment system; the calendar of working days for different groups of earning people in and outside the farm; the price of agricultural products; and the nature of various sources of income at different socio-economic levels of rural households. These prior investigations and consultations with different groups of village people were essential for the measurement and evaluation of household income.

Secondly, we copied a list of village households from the village union council office. This included

the name of the head of each household, the number of household members and the amount of chowkidary tax (village local tax based on the economic condition of each family) paid by the household. The latter information was very important and useful to us as it provided, in advance, an assessment of the relative economic position of all households. We also added some more information (e.g. land, occupation and income sources) to that list with the help of the local guide and other active informants.

Finally, by the time we came to a house to conduct the interview with the household head, we had some background information on the household's economic position which helped us to evaluate the respondent's answers and to arrive at a reasonable estimate of household income. The direct and indirect help rendered by the local guide as mentioned at the beginning of this appendix was of incalculable value, particularly with regard to measuring household income and socio-economic status. The procedure employed to measure socio-economic status of rural households has been explained in Chapter 8.

COMMUNITY LEVEL INQUIRY

In addition to exploration of individual and household factors, an examination of mobility and immobility behaviour of working people from a village community also requires an inquiry into those factors

which are linked to the community itself. At this level of our field investigation, we examined various community characteristics, physical and non-physical (see Table 3), in the three selected rural areas. Information was obtained by surveying available literature as well as using empirical field techniques such as close observation and direct interviews of different cross-sections of rural people, notably village leaders, elders, major occupation groups, and a few other peer groups. The interviews were conducted using structured and unstructured questionnaires.

In each location a common approach was followed. First, on arrival at the survey site a discussion with informants was followed by a general meeting where both informants and common people were invited. In that meeting we aimed (i) to introduce our mission to the villagers, (ii) to gather a range of information through a community questionnaire, and (iii) to explore the nature of mobility behaviour of household earning members from different socio-economic statuses. Second, a number of group-interviews with important occupation groups were held with a view to understanding the relationship between mobility behaviour and various economic activities of the villagers. In the study villages at Rampal, we arranged meetings with vegetable pedlars and porters; at Chandina with rickshaw pullers, weavers and a wide range of haat-bound rural commuters. In the Sakhipur field location, we interviewed a group

of commuters who were mostly engaged in the buying and selling of goats and a few peer groups of seasonal migrants such as fishermen and brickfield labourers.

Appendix 7

HOUSEHOLD CENSUS

DATA FOR RESEARCH CONFIDENTIAL

Field Inquiry Stage - 02

Household Number [ ]

Date of Inquiry _____

Head of HH _____ Occupation _____

Investigator _____

Religion: [1] Islam [2] Hinduism [3] Others

Respondent _____

Father/Husband of head _____

Relation to head _____

Village _____ District _____

Study of COMMUTING AND CIRCULAR MIGRATION FROM VILLAGES OF BANGLADESH.
Department of Geography, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand.

1. Please provide the following personal details for every member of the household resident or temporarily absent at the time of interview.

Member code number	Name (start with head)	Relation-ship to head	Sex M/F	Age in year	Marital status U M W D S	Whether resident (R) or absent(A)	Level of educa-tion *	Principal occupation or working status *	Approx. yearly income from main occupa-tion
01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10

[08] 0. Not applicable (for children below 5 years).
1. No formal education, cannot read nor write.
2. No formal education, but can read and write.
3. Primary grade, class I to class V.
4. Junior high school grade, class VI to class VIII.
5. High school grade, class IX to class X (but not SSC passed).
6. High school graduate, passed SSC.
7. College attendant (but not HSC passed).
8. Passed HSC and below graduation.
9. Graduation (B.A. or equivalent) and above.

[09] Code for non-earners or unemployeds
0. Under age dependent (age below 5 yrs)
1. Housewife
2. House duty/helping housewife
3. Helping family business
4. Student
5. Retired person
6. Old and other disabled
7. Looking for work (first time)
8. Unemployed (lost job/work)
9. Doing nothing (non-student)

contd.

2. Could you please supply the following information regarding the mobility pattern of the movers of the household? (includes those of the current members of the HH who ever involved in any form of circulatory movements either for doing job/work or for achieving education/training).

Member code number	Name (in short)	Place of birth 1 study village (if others specify)	Mobility pattern of their (movers) last movement from the study village											
			Mobility behaviour *	Place of destination (name) Rural Village	Rural union	Rural thana	Urban	Year of move	Duration of staying at destination	If commuter periodicity of commuting *	Main objective of movement *	If returnee Year of last return	Causes of return *	Temporal nature of return *
01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15

[04] 1. Current circular migrant
2. Returnee (from circular migration)
3. Seasonal migrant (current)
4. Return from seasonal migration
5. Present commuter
6. Previous commuter

[11] 1. Daily
2. Weekly
3. Seasonal

[12] 1. For doing job/work
2. Seeking job/work
3. For study/training
4. Getting admission into educational/training institution.
5. Administrative/official purpose
6. Familial purpose.

[14] 1. Completion of job/work
2. Completion of study
3. Looking after parents
4. Looking after properties
5. Finding no work at destination.
6. Losing business
7. Problems of living at destination
8. Others (specify)

[15] 1. Permanent
2. Temporary
3. Seasonal
4. May or may not move further.

SOME AGGREGATE INFORMATION OF THE HOUSEHOLD

3. Labour utilization:
[1] Permanent [2] Regular [3] Sometimes [4] Never
Hire [ ] Exchange [ ] Family labour [ ]

4. Tenural status:
[1] owner farmer [2] owner cum tenant
[3] tenant only [4] landless labour
[5] tenant cum labour [6] others _____

5. Agricultural land owned: (in acres)
Net total [ ] Net paddy land [ ]
Net operated land (in 1980) [ ]

6. Normal capacity of food production: (per year)
[1] Big surplus [2] Marginal surplus
[3] Subsistence only [4] Marginal deficit
[5] Big deficit [6] No agricultural land (for food)

7. Frequency of buying food: (per year)
[1] Regular daily/haat days buyer (in small, almost whole year).
[2] Temporary/seasonal daily/haat days (in small, for part of the year)
[3] Monthly buyer (in bulk)
[4] Seasonal buyer (in bulk, once in every season)
[5] Seasonal buyer (in bulk, in a particular season for part of the year)
[6] Yearly buyer (in bulk, buy any time/season for the whole year).

8. Normal sources of income: (yearly)
[1] Agricultural land/farm
[2] Big business/industry
[3] Small business
[4] Services
[5] Selling labour
[6] Livestock
[7] Craftsmenship
[8] Trees and orchards
[9] Others _____

10. Local tax paid by the HH: _____ TK/year

11. Overall housing condition
[1] Very good [2] Good [3] Fair [4] Poor [5] Very Poor

12 Household Socio-Economic Status [ ] (not printed)

Appendix 8

HOUSEHOLD SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY

DATA FOR RESEARCH CONFIDENTIAL

Field Inquiry Stage - 04

Household Number

Date of Inquiry _____

Schedule Number

Investigator _____

Village _____ District _____

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Department of Geography, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand.

Name of head of household (HH) _____

Respondent's Name _____ (if other than head)

Age _____ Occupation _____

Age _____ Occupation _____

Father/Husband Name _____

Relation to head _____

1. For how many years have you been guiding your household? _____ Years

2. For how long have your household and your family been living in this village?

   (a) Your household: years ☐ generations ☐

   (b) Your family: years ☐ generations ☐

3. When were you separated from your parents' household?

   (a) Before my marriage ☐

   (b) After my marriage ☐

   (c) After having children ☐

   (d) Others (specify) _____ ☐

4. Would you please give me the following details on your housing?

Number of main house	Ownership of the house(s) *	Method of ownership *	Overall structure of the house *	Total floor space (in sq. ft)	Total value (in TK)	Overall housing condition *
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2
1. owned
2. Jointly owned (with whom? _____)
3. Parents' house
4. Rented (TK._____ per month)
5. Sub-lease (TK.____ " ")
6. Relative's house (without rent)
7. Quarters (Govt. and others)

If others specify

3
1. Inherited
2. Built
3. Bought
4. Gifted
5. Take on lease (if other arrangement please specify)

4
1. Pucca (brick built)
2. Semi-pucca (floor pucca)
3. Kutcha (tin & wood)
4. Kutcha (tin & wood & bamboo & jute stick)
5. Kutcha (Bamboo & straw & jute stick)
6. Jhupri

(if others - specify)

7
1. Very good
2. Good
3. Fair
4. Poor
5. Very poor

5. How could you describe your present and future requirements for accommodation?

Description	For home accommodation		For housing accommodation	
	Present	Future	Present	Future
1	2	3	4	5
Plenty of space				
Enough space				
Inadequate space				
Very short of space				

6. Would you please give an account of land owned by the household by different methods of acquisition?

(in acres)

Methods of acquisition	Non-agricultural land			Agricultural land			Total land
	Home-stead	Others	Total	Under cultivation	Fellow & others	Total	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Inherited							
Bought							
Gifted							
Rayet							
Others (specify)							
Total							

7. Could you please give an account of land bought and sold by the household during the last 10 years?

(in acres)

Land bought			Land sold		
Years of buying	Amount bought	Sources of money	Years of selling	Amount sold	Cause(s) of selling
1	2	3	4	5	6

8. Who among the members of the household are earning something**? Please provide details about each earner except the member who has been selected for separate individual detailed study.

Member code number	Name	Principal occupation or work	Subsidiary work	Earner status 1. Principal 2. Major 3. Minor	Principal work			General working place	Yearly income (in Tk.)		
					Employment nature *	Employ-ment contract *	Mode of pay-ment *	*	Cash	Kind (converting cash)	Total
01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12

06
1. Private employer/manager
2. Self-employed (business/professional)
3. Farmer/peasant
4. Employee (service)
5. Labour
6. Day Labour
7. Land owner/rent collector
8. Tenant cum labour
9. Small peasant cum labour
Others (specify)

07
1. Permanent
2. Temporary
3. Regular
4. Casual
5. Seasonal
6. Contract or any odd job
Others (specify)

08
1. Cash
2. Kind
3. Cash & kind
4. Against food and clothes
5. Cash, food and clothes
Others (specify)

09
1. Within his own village
2. Neighbouring areas (villages)
3. Both own and neighbouring
4. Urban place (please also name)
5. Both rural and urban places

** who earn cash, kind or work against food and clothes

9. Could you please answer the following questions regarding your household labour utilization?

(a) How frequent your household hires labour for agricultural work?

[1]	Permanent	[3]	Sometimes
[2]	Regular	[4]	Never

(b) How often your household members exchange their labour?

[1]	Permanent	[3]	Sometimes
[2]	Regular	[4]	Never

(c) How often your household members work as family labour in your household agricultural land?

[1] Regular [2] Sometimes [3] Never

(d) When did your household start to exchange labour?

_____

(e) For how many years have you (i.e. your household) been exchanging labour?

_____

(f) What are the major reasons for exchanging labour by your household?

_____ _____

10. If you possess any of the following household belongings, please state the exact number against that item.

(a) Steel almirah	[ ]	(h) Tube well	[ ]
(b) Dressing table	[ ]	(i) Radio	[ ]
(c) Boat	[ ]	(j) Radio cassette	[ ]
(d) Bicycle	[ ]	(k) Cassette/tape recorder	[ ]
(e) Watch	[ ]	(l) Camera	[ ]
(f) Clock	[ ]	(m) Cows	[ ]
(g) Sewing machine	[ ]	(n) Bull ox	[ ]
		Others (specify) _____	[ ]

11. Would you please give the following statistics on land operated by the household during the last cropping year?

(in acres)

Cropping seasons	Own Land						Rented in					Total land operated (02+07+12)
	Cultivated own	Rented out					Share cropping	Take on lease (in cash)	Mort-gage	Other systems	Total	
		Share cropping	Lease (in cash)	Mort-gage	Other systems	Total						
01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13
Kharif												
Rabi												
Boro												
Other												
Total												
Net operated land												

12. What would be the exact agricultural land tenural status of your household?

01. Landlord (owned big land usually cultivated by employee).
02. Landowner (medium to small landowner, tilling by hiring labour or give lease).
03. Owner cultivator (peasant/farmer).
04. Owner cum tenant farmer.
05. Tenant only.
06. Tenant cum agricultural labour.
07. Landless labour only.
08. Tenant cum landless labour.
09. Owner & tenant & agricultural labour.
10. Others (please specify) _____

13. Would you please give the following details on your agricultural land tenancy?

(a) When did you begin to take land on lease? _____

(b) For how many years have you been taking lease? _____

(c) What are the major reasons for taking lease?

_____ _____

14. Please give an account of land that you either rented in or rented out during the last five years.

(in acres)

Rented in		Rented out	
Year	Amount	Year	Amount
1976		1976	
1977		1977	
1978		1978	
1979		1979	
1980		1980	

15. Could you please supply statistics on your agricultural production and costs during the preceding cropping year?

Types of crop	Production (in maund)					Acreage under different crops		Costs of production (in TK.)						
	From own land		Rented in	Total production	Total value (in TK.)			Labour**			Ploughing	Ferti-lizer	Others	Total costs (11+12+13+14)
	Cultivated own	Rented out				Total	Net	Number		Costs				
								Unpaid HH labours	Hired labours					
01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15
Aman*														
Aus*														
Boro*														
IRRI														
Wheat														
Jute														
Sugar Cane														
Potato														
Oil seeds														
Pulses														
All others														
Total														

* Traditional varieties

** All labours are full-day labour, converting half days or part time into full days. Costs are shown for hired labour only.

16. What would be the normal position of your household in terms of food production and consumption? (ask those HHs who have their own land - see Questions 6 and 12).

(a) Subsistence food grower.

(b) Surplus grower (small surplus normally [ ] maunds surplus per year).

(c) Big surplus grower (normally [ ] maunds per year).

(d) Marginal deficit grower (usually [ ] maunds deficit per year).

(e) Big deficit grower (usually [ ] maunds per year).

17. If you sometimes or always buy your food from the market, what type of buyer are you?

(a) Regular daily or haat days buyer (buy in small amount almost whole year).

(b) Temporary or seasonal daily or haat days buyer (buy in small, for part of the year).

(c) Monthly buyer (buy in bulk).

(d) Seasonal buyer (buy once in every season, in bulk).

(e) Seasonal buyer (usually buy once in a particular season - in bulk, for part of the year).

(f) Yearly buyer (buy once in a year - at any time/season but for the whole year requirement).

18. What are the normal sources of income of your household? How much did your household earn from these sources during 1980?

Income sources	Normal sources (√)	Income in 1980
1	2	3
(a) Agricultural production (food) (See Q.15)		
(b) Agricultural production (non food) "		
(c) Selling labour (Q.8 + Individual Questionnaire)		
(d) Salaries or income from services (")		
(e) Income from business/industries (")		
(f) All rents (land, house, shop, boat etc.)		
(g) Selling land		
(h) Selling other household properties		
(i) Income from livestock		
(j) Cash from trees, orchards, fruits etc.		
(k) Handicrafts and other home products		
(l) Others (specify) _____		
Total		

OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES OF HEAD

19. What is your opinion concerning your household economic condition as compared to that of before liberation of the country and five years back from now?

Before liberation	Five years ago
(a) Better, reasons _____	(a) Better, reasons _____
(b) The same, reasons _____	(b) The same, reasons _____
(c) Worse, reasons _____	(c) Worse, reasons _____

20. Are you involved in any social or economic organization? If yes, please name that (those) organization(s) and state your position too.

(a) Yes ☐ → organization(s): 1._____ Position(s)_____

(b) No ☐ 2._____ _____

3._____ _____

21. How often do you do the following?

	Regular	Sometimes	Infrequent	Never
(a) Use modern fertilizer	☐	☐	☐	☐
(b) Apply chemical pesticides	☐	☐	☐	☐
(c) Grow IRRI	☐	☐	☐	☐
(d) Cultivate other HYV crops	☐	☐	☐	☐
(e) Irrigate your land	☐	☐	☐	☐
(f) Attend village meeting	☐	☐	☐	☐
(g) Attend other socio-political meeting	☐	☐	☐	☐
(h) Visit towns and cities	☐	☐	☐	☐
(i) Casting your vote during national/local election	☐	☐	☐	☐

22. Do you approve or support the following?

	Yes	No
(a) Approve birth control	☐	☐
(b) Ever adopted any method of birth control	☐	☐
(c) Allow females to cast their vote	☐	☐
(d) Allow girls to go to high school	☐	☐
(e) Support co-education in higher schools	☐	☐
(f) Favour female outdoor work/job	☐	☐
(g) Support purdah system	☐	☐

Appendix 9

PROSPECTIVE MOBILITY REGISTER

Field Inquiry Stage- 03

Village _____

Interviewer _____

Date of Interview _____

Supervisor _____

DATA FOR RESEARCH CONFIDENTIAL

Period of Inquiry _____

Week No. [ ]

Schedule No. [ ]

Household Number: [ ]

Member's Code Number: [ ]

Commuter Number : [ ]

Name of Commuter _____

Type of Commuting _____

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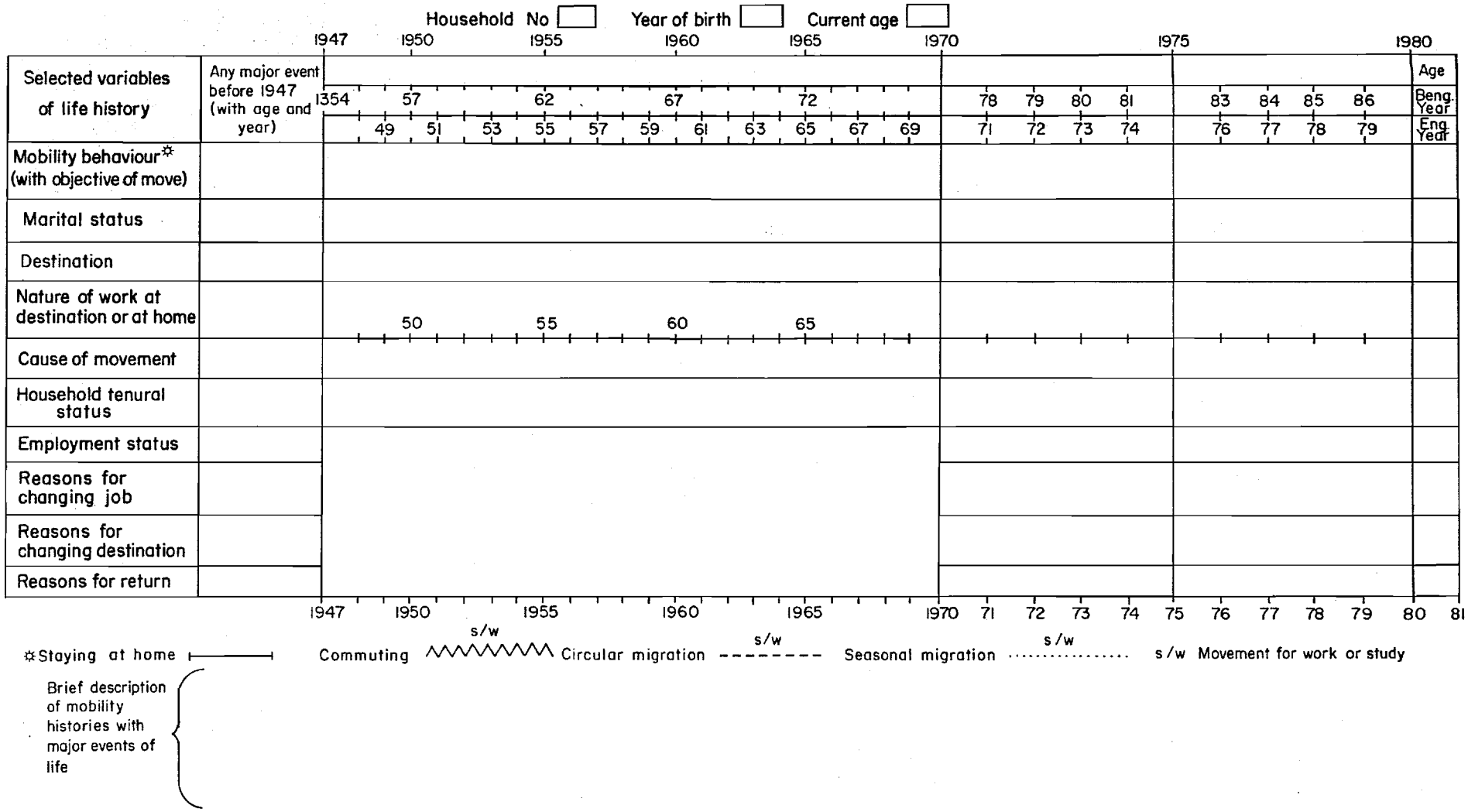
Trip No. (from vill. residence)	Date of leaving home	Time of leaving home	Place of Final Destination				Distance of destn. (from vill. residence) (in miles)	Date of return (to home)	Time of return to home	Period of staying at destn. (hours)	Total period of absence from vill. residence (hours)	Means of trans-portation *	Time spent in travel	Major purposes of travel or commuting	Additional notes of (State reasons for not commuting, if any)
			Rural			Urban									
			Village	Union	Thana	Place									
01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

* 13 1. On foot, 2. Boat, 3. Launch, 4. Rickshaw, 5. Train, 6. Bus, 7. Micro-bus, 8. Tampu/Baby taxi, 9. Others (specify).

Note: Please use back page for writing any comments.

Appendix 10

Interview Format of Partial Life History Survey



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ANU The Australian National University
BBS Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
ESCAP Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UN United Nations

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